The Girl in Her Teens

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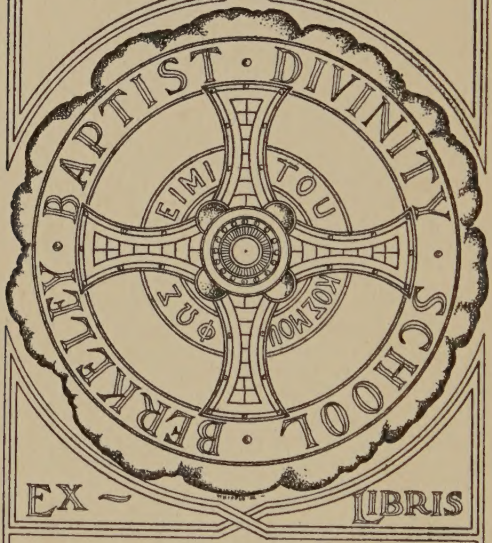

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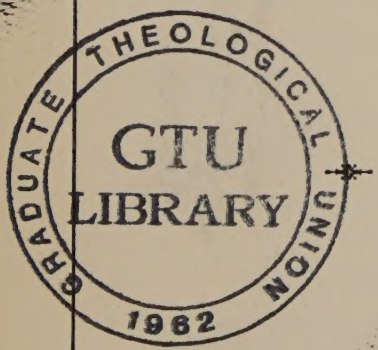
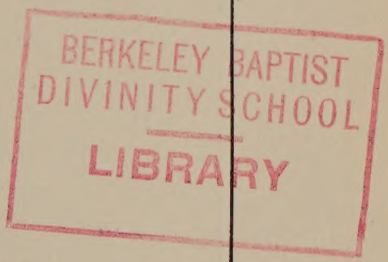
THE GIRL IN HER TEENS

BY

MARGARET SLATTERY





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CHAPTER I

THE TEEN PERIOD

She was a beautiful, well-developed girl of thirteen. Her bright, eager face, with its changing expression, was a fascination at all times. It seemed unusually earnest and serious that particular morning as she stood waiting the opportunity to speak to me. She had asked to wait until the others had gone, and her manner as she hesitated even then to speak made me ask, "Are you in trouble, Edith?"

"No, not exactly trouble,—I don't know whether we ought to ask you, but all of us girls think,—well, we wish we could have a mirror in the locker-room. Couldn't we? It's dreadful to go into school without knowing how your hair looks or anything!"

I couldn't help laughing. Her manner was so tragic that the mirror seemed the most important thing in the educational system just then. I said I would see what could be done about it, and felt sure that what "all the girls" wanted could be supplied. She thanked me heartily, and when she entered her own room

nodded her head in answer to inquiring glances from the other girls.

As I made a note of the request, I remembered the Edith of a year or more ago. Edith, whose mother found her a great trial; she didn't "care *how* she looked." It was true. She wore her hat hanging down over her black braids, held on by the elastic band around her neck; she lost hair ribbons continually, and never seemed to miss them. She was a good scholar, wide-awake, alert, always ready for the next thing. She loved to recite, and volunteered information generously. In games she was the leader, and on the playground always the unanimous choice for the coveted "it" of the game. She was never in the least self-conscious, and, as her mother had said, how she looked never seemed to occur to her.

And now she came asking for a mirror! Her hair ribbons are always present and her hat securely fastened by hat pins of hammered brass. She spends a good deal of time in school "arranging" her hair. Sometimes spelling suffers, sometimes algebra. Before standing to recite, she carefully arranges her belt. Contrary to her previous custom, she rarely volunteers, although her scholarship is very good. If unable to give the cor-

rect answer, or when obliged to face the school, she blushes painfully. One day recently, when the class were reading "As You Like It," she sat with a dreamy look upon her sweet face, far, far away from the eighth-grade class-room; could not find her place when called upon to read, and, although confused and ashamed, lost it again within ten minutes.

What has happened to Edith, the child of a year ago? She has gone. The door has opened. Edith is thirteen. The door opened slowly, and those who knew her best were perhaps least conscious of the changes, so gradual had they been. But a new Edith is here. One by one the chief characteristics of the childhood of the race have been left behind, and the dawn of the new life has brought to her the dim consciousness of universal womanhood. Womanhood means many things, but always three—dreaming, longing, loving. All three have come to her, and though unconscious of their meaning, she feels their power. Edith has seen herself, is interested in herself, has become self-conscious, and for the next few years self will be the center and every act will be weighed and measured in relation to this new self. Fifty other girls, her friends and companions all just entering

their teens, share the same feelings, and manifest development along the same general lines. More than one of those fifty mothers looks at her daughter growing so rapidly and awkwardly tall, and says, "I don't know what to do with her, she has changed so." And more than one teacher summons all her powers to active service as she realizes that for the next two years she is to instruct one of the most difficult of pupils, the girl who is neither child nor woman.

But the awkward years of early adolescence, filled with the struggle to get adjusted to the new order of things, with dreams, with ardent worship of ideals embodied in teachers, parents, older girls, imaginary characters, quickly pass.

If they have been years of careful training, if the eager, impetuous day-dreamer and castle-builder has been guarded and shielded, if she has been instructed by mother, teacher, or some wise sympathetic woman in all the knowledge that will help keep her safe and pure and fine, then she is ready for the wealth of emotion, the increase of the intellectual and spiritual power to be developed within her these next few years.

But if not—if the earliest years have been filled with questions for which no satisfactory

answers were given, if great mysteries that puzzle are solved for her only by what schoolmates, patent medicine advertisements, and imagination can teach, then she does not have a fair chance. She is not well equipped for life, and if in some moment of trial which we fondly dream will never, never come to *her,* to others perhaps, but not to *her,* she is overwhelmed, then we who have left her unguarded are to blame.

If at thirteen she was awkward and sometimes disagreeable, at sixteen we forget all about it, for now she is charming. The flood-tide of life is upon her,—it is June, and all the world is her lover. To be alive is glorious; she shows it in all that she says and does. She laughs at everything and at nothing, and she dearly loves "a good time." She makes use of all the adjectives in her mother tongue, and yet they are not enough to express all that she feels. Superlatives abound, and a simple pronoun, third person, singular number, masculine gender, is introduced so often into her conversation with her girl friends that it reveals at least one prominent "line of interest."

But she is a dreamer still of new, deeper dreams in which self plays a large part, but a different and more altruistic one; and the longings that dawned on her soul with ado-

lescence have grown in power. She not only longs for the concrete hats and gowns and beautiful things, to sing and play, to be admired, to be popular, but she longs to be good and to do good. Now, when all her powers have awakened, obeying instincts of her womanhood, she is ready to give herself in loving service to some great cause, to serve the *world*.

All teachers of English composition can testify to the desire to serve which stands out so clearly in the essay work of girls at this period. Hazel is a type of hundreds. She attended a lecture a while ago and saw pictures of the tenements; the crowded conditions, wretched poverty and suffering children stirred her soul. Every composition since has been a record of her dreams and longings. In every written sketch or story a wretched child of the tenements appears. A girl of means, "about sixteen years of age," with plenty of spending money, seeks out the child, often crippled or blind, gives it food, clothing, a wheel chair, or takes it to a great physician who makes it well. Sometimes the heroine finds work for father and mother, and they move to a cottage in the country and are happy. Always in the story misery is relieved and hearts are made glad. Always the heroine is

self-sacrificing and those helped are touched with deepest gratitude. In the last story, "Little Elsie sat comfortably back in her wheel chair too happy even to move it about. Her mother tried to find words to express her gratitude, but could only murmur her thanks. The child looked up into the face of her kind friend with a celestial smile that paid for all the sacrifice."

This desire to give all in altruistic service, this longing to make the whole world happy, this worship of the *Good* reveals itself too in the girl's effort "to find her Lord and worship Him." The religious sense, so strong in the heart of the race that man must bow down and worship something, some one, be it fire, the moon, the stars, the river, ancestors, idols of wood or stone, is strong in the heart of the girl in her teens. And if rightly taught and presented, the Christ unfailingly becomes her great ideal. All the qualities she most admires she finds in him. Bravery, courage, purity and strength, patience and sympathy, all are there and she worships him. For him she can perform deeds of quiet heroism of which no one dreams,—struggle desperately to overcome her faults, and sacrifice many a pleasure willingly. Her prayers are ardent and sincere, and must rise to heaven as an acceptable offering.

THE GIRL IN HER TEENS

I saw such a girl bow her head in prayer in the crowded church on Easter morning. Her face was good to see. Death and the grave meant nothing to her, but oh, LIFE—it was so good. Sixteen found her hard at work in the cotton factory. But looking at her in her new suit and hat and gloves, and at the one bright yellow jonquil she wore so proudly, you would never have guessed that a week of toil lay behind her and another awaited her. That night she sang a brief solo in the chorus choir, and did it well; one of the boys in the church walked home with her, they talked a few moments, and Easter was over. At five-thirty next morning she rose, ate her hasty, meager breakfast, and went to work in the rain. A week later, when we were talking after Sunday-school, she said, "I don't know as I ever had such a happy Easter. It was such a beautiful day." And then hesitatingly, "I made up my mind I ought to be better than I have been, and I'm not going to let my sister go to work in the mill, no matter what it costs me. I'm going to send her to high school next year instead of taking singing lessons. I decided Easter night."

I could see her sitting in her bare, hopeless little room, with the memory of the sunshine, the new suit and the jonquil, the solo, and the Risen Lord filling her soul as she made her

sacrifice, letting the cherished plan of singing lessons go.

"What made you want to do it?" I asked.

"I don't know," she said, "I felt that I ought to, and Easter makes you think of those things. I think Christians ought to be more like Christ, as Dr.—— said in his sermon."

That was the explanation. She was following, the best she knew how, the pathway of the Christ—her ideal. God bless her,—the sacrifice will pay.

Failing to find the Christ, the religious sense satisfies itself with lower ideals. Intensified longings, dissatisfaction, and a restlessness not found in the girl who truly gives her allegiance to the Christ and feels his steadying power, are very evident in the girl who has not yet found the one whom she can call Master and Lord.

Keeping pace with the deepening and broadening of the religious sense and the physical growth and development, the intellectual powers have been busy grasping new truths, eagerly seizing new facts that relate to life, comparing, rejecting, reasoning, indeed for the first time *independently* thinking.

Before her friends realize it, the years have hurried past and the time has come when only one more "teen" remains. She is eighteen.

Eighteen may find her plunged into life as a wage-earner, one of the procession of thousands of girls facing realities that are hard. It may find her already in the whirl of social life, struggling to meet its demands, or in college facing its problems. Wherever it finds her, two things are true of her. She thinks for herself,—and she is critical.

Many of the theories of life and religion which she accepted unquestioningly she questions now. Doubts assail her, and she is perplexed by the evidence of wrong and evil resulting not only from weakness, but from deliberate planning. If all her ideals fail her, if the men and women she has trusted disappoint her, she grows cynical, and tells you that "no one is what he seems."

Now, more than at any time in her life, she needs to meet fine men and women, that they may overbalance those whom she thinks have failed. She needs to know definitely the good being done everywhere in the world, to study great sociological movements, to see the efforts being made to meet the special needs of the day, the problems of the cities, and the salvation of the individual. Biography is good for her, and sketches of real men and women living and working for and with their fellows strengthen her faith and steady her.

Now is the time when she so easily develops into a gossip, and she needs anything and everything that will help her despise it, and provide her with something to talk about beside her neighbors and associates.

She is keenly critical, because she is comparing theories and life—because her ideals are high and her requirements match her ideals. She is scornful, because she has not lived long enough to realize how easy it is to fail, and she has not learned to let mercy temper justice. She doubts because she is not able to adjust things which seem to conflict, and experience has not yet helped her find harmony in seeming discord.

She still loves a good time, and has it. Her ability as leader, manager, or organizer reveals itself quickly if opportunity is given. Her tendency toward introspection and self analysis often makes her unhappy, dissatisfied and restless. She longs unspeakably to find her work, to be sure she is in the right place in the great world. She needs patience, real sympathy, and understanding from those with whom she lives; to be led, not driven, by those who control her; positive teaching on the part of all who instruct her, concrete interests, social opportunities, and some one to love.

"What does the girl in her teens need?" has

been asked these past few years, by fathers, mothers, and teachers of girls, with increasing desire to find a real answer. As yet, not enough thoughtful people have even attempted to meet the question to make us sure that we have a safe and universal answer. Yet we may be reasonably sure of a few things.

She needs love. But, comes the reply, we do love her. From the time when she "lengthens" her dresses and "does up" her hair, to twenty when we greet her as an equal and consult her about all things, we *love* her. Who could help it?

But she needs *intelligent* love, which is really sympathetic understanding and keen appreciation wisely expressed. And she needs, from thirteen to twenty, to be taught two things: to *work* and to *play*. The girl in her teens needs to be helped to realize her dreams in action.

She has the dreams, the hopes, desires and longings. *We* must furnish the opportunity to work them out into reality. Real, healthful, natural enthusiasms for all phases of life, she can furnish if she be a normally developed girl. The opportunity to express that enthusiastic abundance of life *legitimately* is ours to supply.

It sometimes seems as if Shakespeare must

have been thinking of the adolescent period of life when he said:

"There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which taken at the flood leads on to fortune,
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries."

The teen age is the period where the battle for an honest, clean, pure, righteous type of manhood and womanhood must be waged and won. Having realized this, it now remains for us to bend all our energies and summon all our skill to meet the task.

CHAPTER II

THE PHYSICAL SIDE

That mankind has a spiritual, mental and *physical* side to his nature has been acknowledged for many centuries. That they are of equal importance has been accepted but for a comparatively short time. Time was when the spiritual nature was developed, the mental side cultivated, and the physical scorned and abused. The pale face and emaciated form were indications of the pure heart. The starved body meant the well nourished soul. When men were most deeply concerned with the future beyond the grave, and this life was but a penance, a period to be endured, a terrible battle to win, having little joy, and almost no pleasure not labeled *wicked*, it was natural that they should treat with a measure of scorn or ignore altogether the physical body in which dwelt so much of evil. But when man realized that eternity begins here and now, he turned his thoughts to the present welfare of his fellows, and the physical side assumed a new importance.

In some cases the importance attached to

physical welfare is out of proportion. It is always difficult to keep a sense of proportion when new light on any line of truth bursts upon men's minds. But in the main the place of the physical side is not exaggerated. Every teacher in the public school realizes it as she sees what a tremendous difference has been made in the spiritual and intellectual development of a child who after years of ineffectual struggle to *see* has been given glasses that make it possible for him to do the same work as his classmates. She realizes it as with astonishment she sees a boy transformed before her eyes, changed into an entirely different child as the weeks and months pass, because the troublesome and deadening adenoids have been removed. She realizes it as she sees a poor, weak little girl, undersized and underfed, changed into a new being under treatment, with plenty of nourishing food and fresh air. The experience of the past ten years alone, in the public schools, will convince one of the value of the physical.

Certain it is that the physical side exists, and is to be reckoned with in the development of human life to the highest possible point. The more we know about the physical side, the more we stand in awe of ourselves, and the more we appreciate the wonderful

machine with which we are to do our work in the world.

I saw recently two locomotives that taught me again what it all means. One had been in a wreck and lay pitched over on its side, its splendid power gone. Its size and its powerful strength made its ruin more pitiful, and its utter helplessness appealed strongly to all who looked at it. Near it on the second track, all hot and panting, ready and waiting to pull its heavy load up the steep grade, was a fellow engine, in full possession of its powers: how strong, how complete, how perfectly able to perform its task it seemed as it stood there on the track beside its helpless brother. For days I could not forget the picture, and when I looked into the faces of my girls in their teens all it suggested impressed me anew.

How I should like to have them fully equipped physically to meet the demands which life will bring to them! The girl in her teens has a physical side of tremendous significance and importance, for it is during these years that she develops her powers or wrecks them. It is her time of rapid growth, of severe tax upon every part of her physical being. It is during these years she meets her crises.

We have seen that early in her teens a girl

begins to care "how she looks." She should be encouraged to look well. She should dress carefully, which does not mean expenditure of much money, but does mean thought. She should be taught that dress means much, and physical condition even more.

But all this, some teachers may say, belongs in the home. It is the duty of the home to look after these things. Yes, it is true. And it is a cause for thanksgiving that in so many homes, sweet, patient, wise mothers watch over their girls and give them what they need. But every Sunday-school teacher of girls in their teens has at least one girl whose mother does not or can not help at the time when help is most needed. Some have had no training themselves and do not see the need; some are crushed by the multitude of burdens, some are careless, and some have no knowledge as to how to cope with the wilfulness of girls which sometimes appears in the years of adolescence. "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick," the great Teacher said once, and it is true to-day. Both the public school and the Sunday-school exist to cultivate all of good that appears in the girl's life, and develop what she lacks.

Here is a group of girls in a certain Sunday-school class, most of them well taken care of

physically, but with very little of direct teaching and development morally. They are selfish, self-centered, and vain. The teacher's task is clear. Here is another class in a nearby church, suffering not only from moral and intellectual neglect, but from physical as well. Again the teacher's task is plain.

We have seen that buried deep in the heart of every adolescent girl is the desire to be attractive, to be popular, to have people "like" her. This desire prompts her often to little acts of courtesy and kindness and efforts to be agreeable; more often it prompts her to make herself physically attractive. Take a walk through any park, along the boulevards, up the main street of small manufacturing towns, or watch any high school group at the hour of dismissal: if your eyes are open you will be conscious of the struggle to be attractive,—to look well. It is registered in hair and hats, bows and chains and pins. Sometimes it appears in fads in dress,—low shoes and silk stockings in winter, or the strange combination of no hat, a very thin coat, and a huge muff. These are the things that make the people of common sense ask the very pertinent question, "What are these girls' mothers thinking of?" It is a hard question to answer satisfactorily. Often the mothers have helplessly yielded

under the power of that insistent phrase, "All the girls do."

If once these girls can be made to see the attractiveness of absolute cleanliness, of the charm of simple but spotless clothing, of teeth, hair, hands and skin that show *care*, a great deal will have been done toward helping their general physical condition.

Anything which has to do with personal appearance must be handled with great tact, for the adolescent girl is sensitive and she resents direct criticism. But on the other hand she accepts eagerly anything which promises to help her look well. If a teacher does not feel equal to the task of assisting the girl to make the best of her physical side she can find some one to help her. I know of one class of girls in their teens who will never forget the talk given by a bright, attractive, clever woman at the monthly social, on "Tales Told by Belts," and not a girl in the Girls' Club, I know, ever forgot the talk on "Sometimes the *Head* Rules and Sometimes the *Feet*." More girls than usual wore rubbers the next rainy day, and some high heels disappeared.

Perhaps one of the most helpful of the litttle incidental ways by which the Sunday-school teachers may help is through praise. I have in mind now a girl of sixteen who

usually selected her own clothes, and seemed to have a talent for putting together the wrong colors. One spring, she, in some way, was persuaded by another girl to have her coat, dress and hat all in browns that harmonized. One can hardly imagine the change it made in the girl. She realized it. That Sunday in the hall, I told her very quietly that she looked "dear," that she must never wear anything except soft colors that harmonized; that I loved to look at her. She showed her pleasure. The next January she asked me one night if I thought dark blue would be all right for her new suit if she got "everything to match."

No one can associate sympathetically with the girl in her teens week after week and not be concerned about her physical welfare. There are so many pale, anemic, tired girls that move one's heart. Some work too hard. Many live under unhygienic conditions. Many can not stand the pressure and rush of school and social life. Great numbers suffer from improper food, and many more because they do not get enough sleep. Almost every Sunday I hear some girl say she "went somewhere every night last week." This mania for "going" seizes so many of our girls just when they need rest and natural pleasures, the great out-of-doors, and early hours of retiring.

THE PHYSICAL SIDE

So many of our girls are "nervous." A bright, interesting eighth grade teacher told me recently that she had fifty girls in her class and that according to their mothers forty-one were "very nervous." It seemed to her a large proportion even for girls in their early teens, and she began a quiet study of some of them. One of the "very nervous" girls who, her mother thought, must be taken out of school for a while, takes both piano and violin lessons, attends dancing school, goes to parties now and then, and rarely retires before ten o'clock. Another "very nervous" girl takes piano lessons, goes to the moving picture shows once or twice a week, hates milk, can't eat eggs, doesn't care much for fruit, and is extremely fond of candy. In each case investigated there seemed to be much outside of school work which could explain the "nervousness."

It is most interesting to note the gain, physically, made by almost every girl in her teens who enters a good boarding-school, where plenty of exercise, a cheerful atmosphere, regular hours and wholesome food is the rule.

Just how much the Sunday-school teacher who is a real friend of the girl in her teens can help is a question, but I know of enough cases where an earnest interview with the father or

mother has resulted in better care of the growing girl, with more attention paid to her food and rest, to make me sure that it pays to attempt to help. If it only means that the girl in her teens shall not go to school or to work without breakfast, it pays.

I can almost hear some troubled teacher ask, "Where in the Sunday-school hour is there time for this?" It can not be done in a Sunday-school hour except incidentally. But those who are at work with girls in their teens must teach more than a lesson on Sunday. They are teaching *girls* to *live*, if they have entered whole-heartedly into the work.

Every girl in her teens is interested in her physical self. The ways in which she strives to satisfy her curiosity and desire for knowledge are often pitiful, often to be deplored.

From my experience I am convinced that anything which tends to center her interest upon the physical is unwise. For this reason I very much doubt the advisability of class instruction, except in general matters of hygiene. What the whole class is interested in they will discuss. It will be the main topic of conversation among "chums" as they separate after class, and the effect I am convinced is bad, simply because it centers thought upon a subject which to the girl in

her teens should not be the chief interest. Then, too, the individuals in a class vary so much that the instruction to be given needs special wisdom, tact and comprehensive knowledge of girls which not every teacher possesses.

That instruction should be given, and that questions must be answered, is true. A girl's mother is the natural and best agency through which knowledge should come to her, and the Sunday-school teacher may very easily enlist the mother's sympathy, urge her to be true to her daughter's need, and show her how necessary it is that she faithfully instruct her child in the things she needs to know. If the mother says, as is often the case, that she *can't*, that she does not know how, etc., then the teacher may offer to help with suggestions, with books, or, if the mother asks her to do so, may talk with the girl herself. Such a conversation on the part of the teacher should never be forced, but introduced naturally and easily in some opportune moment. Sometimes, if there is real confidence and sympathy between pupil and teacher, the girl herself will open the way.

In a hundred ways, both in teaching and in conversation with the girls, the Sunday-school teacher may show her own respect for the physical side of life, the marvel of it all, and

the need on the part of every woman to obey its unchanging laws, from which, if broken, there is no escape. In scores of ways she will frankly and naturally reveal to her girls her sympathy with womanhood everywhere, in every walk of life, and especially her respect for mothers, and her love for helpless childhood.

Girls learn so much more, and the impressions made are far deeper, through this almost unconscious influence of the teacher than through the "lecture" or "lesson." I shall not soon forget the impression made upon a class of girls of eighteen years of age by the preparation of a complete outfit to be presented to a poor woman whose child was to come into the world in a tiny third-story room amidst deepest poverty. As one of the girls said, "It will be a lucky baby, after all, with eight of us to look after it." Both teacher and girls felt new bonds of sympathy long before the last tiny garments were finished, and the girls had learned much.

It is not good for girls in their teens, especially in the latter part of the period, to be closely associated with women who are cynical, who have forgotten the tenderness of their own girlhood dreams, or who are out of sympathy with the great fundamentals of life.

The teacher may so easily reveal, too, her respect for the conventionalities of life. In her escape from the narrowing influences of the conventionalities of older countries, the American girl has gone so far into liberty that she does not realize the protection that lies behind simple conventionality. While it is perfectly true that a girl may travel alone from one end of this country to the other with safety, it is not true that it is wise for her to do so. Fathers are beginning to realize it, and daughters though not "in society" are enjoying the assurance that, if obliged for social or business reasons to be out late, their fathers will call for them. It will mean an effort on the part of the father, but it brings a reward, for his daughter, feeling herself guarded and protected, develops into a finer type of woman.

The girl in her teens is interested always in the influence of the passions and emotions upon the physical nature, and knowledge given in a simple direct way is good for her.

"Why do some people get very pale and others very red, when they are angry?" asked a fourteen-year-old girl one day.

"Sometimes you tremble when you are angry," said another; "and you usually talk very fast," added a third. The discussion

which followed was interesting and helpful. They were astonished at the reports made by physicians and students of the effect upon digestion of angry words, or sullen silence, during dinner. They learned in a new way the value of the temper controlled, and of self-mastery in all lines. They were interested enough to bring into class instances of self-control under trying circumstances, and of calamities following complete loss of control for only a few minutes. I think they realized in a new way the majesty of the perfect self-control of Christ in the most trying moments of his life. We talked over with profit the effect upon the physical life, of hurry, of fear, of worry and useless anxiety, and have tried to find why the Christ was free from them all. The conclusions reached by the girls themselves have been helpful in every instance.

As long as we live, the physical will be with us; it is not to be despised, but respected; not to be ignored, but developed; not to be abused, but used. It demands obedience, and exacts penalty when its laws are broken. It is so complicated that no one can understand it. We may study and analyze, but how much of the physical is mental, and how much of the spiritual is physical, no one to-day is able to

say. Of this we may be sure,—the physical side of the girl in her teens is a tremendous force that must be reckoned with, and demands for its fullest development and her future well being all the sympathy, patience, and wisdom that parents and teachers can supply.

CHAPTER III

THE MENTAL SIDE

The girl in her teens does think. She has been called careless, thoughtless, inattentive and a day-dreamer. Though these things are often true of her, she is on the whole a thinker. Her day-dreams are thoughtful. In building her air castles she uses memory and imagination, and sometimes one wonders if these factors to which we owe so much do not get as valuable training from "dreams" as from algebra. Certain it is that many women who have helped make the world a more comfortable place in which to live laid plans for their future work on sweet spring days, or long autumn afternoons when Latin grammar faded away in the distance, and things vital, near, and real came to take its place.

When Lucy Larcom stood by the noisy loom in the rush and whirl of the big factory, day-dreaming while her busy hands fulfilled their task, memory and imagination were being trained, and one morning the world read the day-dream. At first it was a picture of flowers and fields and cloudless skies, then it came

back to the tenements on the narrow streets and said:

"If I were a sunbeam,
I know where I'd go,
Into lowliest hovels,
Dark with want and woe.
Till sad hearts looked upward,
I would shine and shine.
Then they'd think of heaven,
Their sweet home and mine."

This and many another gem the imagination of the factory girl wrought out beside the loom.

The day-dreams, the "castles" reared by the imagination of girlhood, must find expression, and they do—in diaries, "literary productions" and poems at which we sometimes smile.

But who shall say that the mental side of the girl in her teens does not get as much valuable training through the closely written journal pages, or the carefully wrought poem which perhaps no one may ever see, as through the "daily theme" or the essay written according to an elaborate outline, carefully criticized by the teacher. The ambitions of the adolescent girl along literary lines often receive a rude shock when her essay is returned with red lines drawn through what, to her, are the most effective adjectives and most beautiful descriptions.

Many a literary genius has been destroyed by the red lines of an unimaginative instructor. But there are some wise enough to allow the girl to express herself in true adolescent fashion, criticizing only when errors in punctuation, sentence formation or spelling occur, and letting her gradually outgrow the glaring wealth of imagery that is the right of every girl in her teens.

But the adolescent girl does not think in "dreams" alone. She thinks in the hard terms of the practical and the every day. Her mental life, expanding and enlarging, is stirred to unusual activity, as is her physical nature, and she makes so many discoveries absolutely new to her that she thinks them new to all. She gives information of all sorts to her family and expects respectful attention. She knows more than her mother, criticizes her father, gives advice to her grandmother, and is willing to decide all questions for the younger members of the family. She has a new idea of her own importance, and sees herself magnified.

It seems but yesterday since she was just a little girl, willing to be guided, directed, ruled by her elders. Now she resents the direct command, persists in asking "why," and is not satisfied with "because I think best." She

chafes under strict discipline, rebels openly, sulks, or yields with an air of desperate resignation when her dearest desires are denied. She thinks she knows best. That is her chief trouble. The things she wants to do seem best to her,—she thinks they will mean her real happiness, therefore she chooses them. That were she allowed to follow her own choice ten years from now she would sadly regret it does not influence her much, for the now is so near and so desirable.

I was calling one evening in the home of a friend who has a sixteen-year-old daughter. A few moments after I was seated she came into the room wearing a simple evening gown of pale blue silk, her hair arranged in the latest fashion, and her eyes dancing with excitement and anticipation. I could easily pardon the look of satisfied pride upon the faces of both her father and mother. After greeting me cordially she said, "Mother, I may do it just this time, mayn't I? Please, mother!" "Do what?" said the mother. "You know, the carriage. Harry's father gave him the money, and it's so much nicer than the crowded car."

"I told you this afternoon what I thought about it," said the mother, "but you may ask your father."

She referred the matter to him. "Harry"

wanted to have a carriage and drive home after the party, his father was willing and had given him the money. And now mother objected! All the nicest girls were going to do it, but mother preferred a crowded street-car! Supreme disgust and a sense of injustice showed in voice and manner. Her father smiled, as he said, "Well, I think your mother is about right." Still the girl persisted until her father said sternly, "Mildred, you may do as we wish or remain at home." Sullen silence followed, while she made preparations to go. As her mother helped her on with her wrap, she said kindly, "I'm so sorry, Mildred. It is hard for us to deny you, but a few years from now you will understand and be grateful."

The daughter's answer came quickly: "That is what you always say, but I know I'm missing all the pleasures the other girls have."

The mother was discouraged. "I don't know what to do with Mildred," she said, after her daughter had gone, "she seems to have lost all confidence in us."

"No," I said, "she hasn't. She has supreme confidence in herself. If you had frankly told her your reason for refusing her request, or simply said that it was not the proper thing, since you could not furnish her with a chap-

eron, it might have helped. But if you treat her as patiently for the next few years as you have done to-night, she will come out all right."

I am sure she will. The rapid development of her mental life is showing through her will. The years are coming when she will *need* to choose for *herself*. The power to choose is being developed now. Inexperience leads her to make unwise choices, and so the experience of older and wiser people must guide her, and if necessary decide for her. But wherever it is possible for her to choose for herself, whenever the issue at stake is not too great, the wise parent and teacher will allow her to choose, yes, even require her to do so, that the power of choice may be developed and the mental forces strengthened. And when she has chosen they will help her carry out her choice, that she may see the result and judge of its wisdom, thus helping her in the struggle to develop both will and judgment.

The time when parents attempted to break the will is passing. The wise parent and teacher of the girl in her teens knows that she needs, if her future is to be useful and happy, not a broken will but a trained will. Training is a slow and steady process and requires unlimited patience.

The aim of every one in any way responsible for the education of the girl in her teens is to help her to see the right and desire it. If that can be done for her, she has at least been started on the road that leads to safety. This is the time when those who teach her may help her to see the value of promptness, absolute accuracy, and dependableness. When she promises to do a thing it is the duty of all who teach her to help her keep that promise. But she must always see the value of the thing taught. The mind must be satisfied; she must know why. The girl in her teens is developing the individual moral sense, and if the years are to bring strength of character every open avenue to the mind must be used to help in constantly raising standards and impressing truth.

The awakening of the girl in her teens to new phases of mental activity reveals itself in her passion for reading. It is true that some girls before twelve read eagerly all sorts of books, but most girls develop a genuiue love for reading with adolescence. They then become omnivorous readers. When one looks over lists of "Books I Have Read" prepared by high-school girls he is astonished by the number and variety.

It is most interesting to note the books des-

ignated in personal conversation as "the dearest story," "just great," "dandy," "perfectly fine," "elegant," "beautiful," and "the best book I have ever read." That these books have a tremendous influence on the mental life in forming a "taste" for literature, and furnishing motives for action, ideals, and information, no one can doubt.

Who helps these girls to satisfy their hunger for a "good book to read?" Many have no help,—they read what they will. Sometimes the parent acts as guide, often the book lists gotten out by the city librarian, or graded lists of books prepared by teachers in the public school, although many times at just the period when most reading is being done the "lists" disappear from the schoolroom. Seldom does the Sunday-school teacher guide her girls in their choice of books, yet this is one of the most valuable and helpful things a woman can do for a girl.

One often wishes there were more books of the right sort for the girl in her teens. With the exception of the old standards that remain helpful to succeeding generations there are comparatively few books for girls that are interesting, fascinating, wholesome, and free from those "problems" on which few women and no girls can dwell with profit. Modern

writers have given us a few fine, inspiring stories for girls, and the teacher who seeks them out, reads them, and then passes them on to her girls is helping in a real and definite way to deepen and broaden character. All teachers of girls are hoping that, now so many good books for boys have been written, our writers will turn their attention to girls and their needs.

Girls in their teens need biography and enjoy it. They need to know fine women who have actually lived. If the lives of such women could be written for girls they would find eager readers. The author of the life of Alice Freeman Palmer has presented an inspiring and helpful gift to the girls of all time, and its influence can never be estimated. We need more such books.

No one of us would return for a moment to the stories of heroines so good that in the last chapter they died and went to heaven, but we do need books in which girls and women are sane, reasonable, and good, yet live, and enjoy living to the full. The world is full of wholesome, true, womanly women, and our girls need to know about them in fact and fiction.

The mental activity of the girl in her teens reveals itself also in her great desire to know.

During the period of her teens the girl so often appears superior to the boy mentally. Sometimes she is, but more often the seeming superiority can be explained in two ways: the hunger for knowledge and longing to understand life come to her earlier than to the boy; she desires to excel, and feels more keenly the disgrace of low rank and unsatisfactory progress in her studies, which leads her to devote more time and conscientious effort to master them. While her brother is buried deep in athletics, she is buried in dreams, romances and facts. She wants things explained. After sixteen, there dawns the period when she demands that her teacher shall know. She must have knowledge. Some teachers of girls in the later teens hold their interest through a charming personality, a knowledge of the heart of a girl, and a clever presentation of lessons. Still, such teachers are unable oftentimes to help the girl in her struggle to straighten out tangles of what she calls "faith" and "knowledge."

She asks with a new earnestness, "Are the miracles true?" "Is the Bible different from other books?" Only last week a girl of eighteen, suffering with her dearest friend, whose brother had been sentenced to a term in prison for gross intoxication, said to me: "That man

prays often when he is sober to be kept from drinking, how can God let him do it when it is just killing his mother and all the family? I don't see how it can be true that God loves men when he lets them be so wicked, and when people suffer so, and starve and die in wrecks and fires and—it's terrible. I know you will think I'm awful, but sometimes I don't believe in God at all." Her voice trembled, and I knew the hurried sentences represented months of thinking. I did not consider her "awful." God help her—she has looked the old, old problem of evil squarely in the face for the first time, and is staggered by it. How to help her in this crisis we shall consider in our discussion of the "Spiritual Side."

She needs now more than ever a teacher who can understand her, who has thought things out for herself, who can teach positively, who is too near life to worship creed, and too large to be dogmatic. One so often wishes, when looking into the face of some thoughtful girl, with mind keen, alert, active, but perplexed and confused by knowledge that seems to contradict itself, for some miracle by which for a moment the Great Teacher might come and speak to her the words that made his doubting pupil say, "My Lord and my God."

THE MENTAL SIDE

The mental activity of the girl of to-day reveals itself in the later teens by a keen and deep interest in social questions, in the great problems that concern women. But a few weeks since I looked into the faces of scores of earnest college girls, many in their later teens, who were discussing at a week-end conference, "The Individual and the Social Crisis." It was not a mere discussion. These girls had plans, they had facts, they were looking at the question on all sides. Within the month I met another group in conference. They were a "Welfare Committee" for an organization of working girls. They knew what they were talking about, they had plans, and were seeking solutions for problems that needed to be solved.

The girl in her teens is a dreamer at thirteen, seeking to realize her dreams in real life at nineteen.

During those six wonderful years of repeated crises, the mental life of the girl is being shaped and determined by environment. To some extent the teacher may influence that environment, and become a real part of it. It is her privilege to furnish the imagination, through prose and poetry, with fields in which to wander afar, broaden the vision through books of travel and information which she

may put in the girl's way, increase her love of music and pictures through occasional concerts and visits to the art galleries, and in scores of little ways open new doors to the greater realms of knowledge which, if unaided, she would have passed by.

It is a great thing to be able to help another mind to think for itself. That, the wise teacher is always striving to do. She challenges her girls to think. This is the reason why she wants the girl in her teens to know something of the history of the church; to be acquainted with the young men and women on the mission field, and know what they are doing; to know what the cities are trying or refusing to do for the housing of the poor, and for the protection of women and girls; to know the laws of home hygiene, and to use her mental faculties to help answer the question of the relation of the church and the individual under existing conditions in her own community and in the world. The girl in her teens is interested most in the very thing in which the Great Teacher was himself interested—life, the life of his own day, and he so instructed his disciples that the eyes of their understanding were opened and they began to think for themselves and of their fellowmen.

THE MENTAL SIDE

We have to-day, in the girl in her teens, who in large numbers is still in our Sunday-schools, a tremendous mental force. Were it awakened and developed, helped to see and interpret life according to the principles of Jesus, in fifty years the church would find most of its present problems solved. For hard to realize as it is when looking into the faces and training the minds of the girls in their teens of to-day, still it is true that we are looking at and training the women of to-morrow, yes, those who a few years hence holding their children in their arms, shall decide all unknowing what the next generation of men and women shall be and do.

To encourage the girl in her teens to use her mental powers to the utmost, to help her gain knowledge and self-control, to guide her in her thinking, is the task of every parent and teacher, and it is a task tremendously worth while.

CHAPTER IV

THE SPIRITUAL SIDE

All civilization begins in sensation and feeling. The most abstruse and abstract thought of to-day is possible because ages and ages ago men living in caves were hungry and sought food, were cold and sought warmth, felt fear and sought protection. They conquered in battle with fierce animals and neighboring tribes, and felt the joy of victory and the satisfaction of possession. The "self" sensations and feelings are at the foot of the ladder of civilization by which man, with almost infinite patience has climbed thus far. But self is not all. As the ages passed, man's pleasure of protection included his neighbor in his feeling and thought. Misfortune evoked pity, and suffering called forth sympathy, the desire for fair play for self grew until it became a sense of justice which included the other man, and the moral sense developed and was strengthened by experience through the succeeding ages.

From the beginning "the *spirit* of man sought ever to speak." At first he would pro-

pitiate the spirits of air and fire, the rulers of earth and sea, the harvest and the battle,—please them and buy their favor that he might be happy. In weird chants and dances, in feast days and fast days, by sacrifice and penance, he endeavored to appease the spirits of his gods and insure happiness for himself. Great multitudes of the human race have gone no farther. After all the progress of thought their prayers are still intense appeals for blessing upon self and self-interests, and they still keep the feasts and fasts, and bring offerings with hope of personal reward. But every century brings an increasing number so filled with the sense of another's need that in some measure at least they forget self. Their prayers are petitions for others,—their gifts are poured out without thought of recompense; the spiritual nature within them, awakened and developed, triumphs and manifests itself in a thousand varying deeds that bless mankind.

This spiritual nature, which from the beginning has sought after its Creator that it might worship him, is not a thing apart, living in a separate "house," but rather a phase of man's complexity. It depends for its growth upon both the physical and mental sides of man's nature, and cannot be divorced from them.

At the foot of the path that reaches to the very height of spiritual life, we find feeling as sensation and emotion. The myriad sensations which express themselves in bodily consciousness through the physical, and the emotions which find expression through mental consciousness, can not escape their share of responsibility for the development of the spiritual side. As year after year he sees successive classes of children repeat the development of their predecessors, one stands in awe and reverence before the presence of laws which seem universal in the development of child life. He notes the days when life means food and clothing furnished by another. He notes the strong development of the self interests to the exclusion of others. He sees the gradual development of the sense of justice, of pity, of sympathy. He watches the development of altruism in adolescence. He sees the rapid change of body, mind, and spirit, and witnesses the struggle for control, sometimes on the part of one, sometimes the other, until at last physical, mental or spiritual emerges in control of a life. Or in the rarer cases, where a more perfect development has come, all three work together in the effort to make a perfectly balanced man.

We saw in our brief study of the physical

side that a girl in her teens can feel. Her whole being is sensitized, ready at a moment's notice to respond. In our study of the mental side we saw that she can and does think, is capable of the heights and depths of emotion, and is able in a limited way to make comparisons and reach sane conclusions.

As the physical side of her nature is awake and the mental side keen, curious and eager, so the spiritual side feels the thrill of new life and opens to all the wealth of impression. She is close to the great mysteries of life, and "whence came I, what am I here for, where am I going," press her for answer. In her early teens she accepts gladly the theories and creeds of those who teach her. There are comparatively few "unbelievers" from thirteen to sixteen. The average girl at this period is religious in the truest sense of the word. Her moral sense is keen, her conscience is alive,—she longs unspeakably to be good; to overcome jealousy and envy; to be truthful, thoughtful of others; and a score of minor virtues she longs to possess. Yet in strange perversity she is often none of these things. She finds it easy to pray, and a song, a picture, a story filled with deeds of deepest self-sacrifice, awakens immediate response. She can be appealed to through her

emotions, and her deepest religious sense touched and developed. The awakening of her spiritual nature thus through the emotions is perfectly legitimate. The appeal should never be sensational, and never under any circumstances awaken an hysterical response. Not tears but unbounded joy should be the result of her response to an appeal to all that is best in her.

If the Sunday-school were equipped with just the right teachers, and able to so influence parents and home conditions that the girl in her early teens were regular in attendance, very few would reach the age of sixteen without having determined to love and obey God and to live in the world as Christ lived. Almost all would unite with the church, which is the visible expression of the religious life, —and be ready to throw themselves into its work.

In all my experience with Sunday-school girls of this period regular in attendance and interested in the work I have found when talking with them that they invariably say, "I think I *am* a Christian," "I am trying hard to be good and to be a Christian," "I am willing to sign the card, I have been trying to be a Christian for a long time," etc., etc. Then, having so expressed themselves, if later I

talk over with them the matter of uniting with the church, I find only a few objections repeated year after year by successive classes. "My father and mother think I am too young," "My father says I would better wait until I know what I am doing," "I am afraid I am not good enough," and the one most reluctantly expressed, "If I join the church I am afraid I'll have to ——," then follow the things which perhaps must be given up. I have yet to find the girl from thirteen to sixteen who has been a regular attendant at Sunday-school since primary age who has no desire to call herself a Christian. The splendid devotion to duty, the sympathy, the service to the world, the marvelous love and compassion, the supreme sacrifice of our Lord, makes the strongest possible appeal to the spiritual nature of the girl. We may confidently expect her to respond, and she does.

But if the girl has been irregular in attendance, has lost interest in class or teacher, is permitted to enjoy the stimulus of social life while too young, comes to church only on special occasions, has little or no definite moral instruction at home, and does not come into close touch with rich spiritual life, she will drift through the years of adolescence with her spiritual nature undeveloped and express-

ing itself only in vague longings unsatisfied. The chances are that such a girl will never have anything but a superficial interest either in her own development or the vital life of the church expressed in its various agencies.

Two years ago, at a conference, a girl of sixteen from a fashionable boarding-school, coming from a home where fads and fashions rule, said to me, "I never knew Christ was so wonderful, but then I have never thought much about it, though I go to morning service in the winter. I have never met women and girls like those I have seen this week; they are so interesting,—they are doing so many things to help people,—they seem to love to live. I don't want to live a mean, selfish kind of life. I am going back to school for my last year. What can I do? How can I help?" I have met many girls of whom she is the type. Little is being done for the spiritual side of their natures. The Sunday-school at present does not reach them to any great extent. One of the greatest problems facing the fashionable church is how to reach in any way girls in their teens who are members of its congregation. Such girls with their abundance of life have at least a right to those things offered in the Sunday-school which will mean the awakening and developing of the spirit.

They need teachers especially equipped in every way to meet them and help them. To find such teachers is one of the problems that must be met within the next few years. Perhaps we may look confidently for help before long to the girls of culture and refinement now in our colleges hard at work upon every kind of problem dealing with the development of a better life for girls and women. For these girls are beginning to look at the Sunday-school seriously as the means of bringing moral and religious education to girls of all classes, and are asking how they may best equip themselves for service in its various departments.

The problem of the other girl is just as great. She works all the week, and when on Sunday morning she is tired, the family sympathize. She gradually drops out of Sunday-school, is not able because of her long hours to enter into the work of the church, does not come into contact with any vitalizing spiritual force, and slowly this part of her nature, lacking food and stimulus, begins to die. She spends Sunday afternoon and evening socially, and enters upon the new week's work with no uplift of soul and spirit to help her when temptations come.

She needs a real teacher, sympathetic and

appreciative, to hold her during the first years of her working life. One who can make the class a social factor, and by her effort and personality make the Sunday-school hour interesting enough to insure attendance. Then the teacher has an opportunity at least to bring the girl into contact with Christ, and through instruction to feed and develop her spiritual nature until it is ready through exercise to develop itself.

The spiritual nature needs food as does the physical. If the physical life is poorly nourished in this time of the most rapid development, a loss of vitality and power is the inevitable result. The same is true of the mental life. There must be healthful, attractive, abundant food for interesting, enjoyable thought. And just as surely the spiritual life, unless the emotions and moral sense are nourished, will yield to slow paralysis or run into wrong and wasteful channels.

But there comes a time in the spiritual experience of the girl, usually about sixteen, when she wants to do something to express the longing to give herself which is growing more intense each year. If the Sunday-school and church are together able to provide her with work she is fairly safe for the next few years. The work will mean definite interest,

will call for some sacrifice, and will bring the satisfaction of accomplishment. The spiritual side of her nature will find in this way opportunity for immediate expression, and we must never let the fact escape us that without opportunity for expression abundant life is impossible.

Sooner or later there is bound to come to the average girl in her teens a period of doubting, anxious questioning. Most often it appears at the very end of the period. The outcome of this longer or shorter period of turmoil in thought may be a much broader, deeper faith in the Christian ideals and the realities of life, or it may be a drifting away from the church and the loss of definite faith in anything.

There are in the world many more people who will not *do* than who will not *believe,* but a large and growing number of young women are questioning, doubting, and finally deciding that we can not know, and that the faith of our childhood is without reasonable foundation. Some of these will seek satisfaction for the spiritual nature in later years in all sorts of "isms," "ists," and cults; some will drop all definite terms of faith and find a measure of satisfaction in educational work among the poor. Some will grow hard and cynical, lose

all interest in any visible form of religion, and give themselves over to a good time. The doubters and questioners are often thoughtful, sincere young people, with mental ability of the best sort and high moral sense, and every Sunday-school teacher who has any influence with them must put forth every possible effort to save them, for their own sake and that of the world. For the world can ill afford to lose its women of faith.

Occasionally, the girl who asks questions is not sincere in her desire to find answers; she just wants to argue. Argument with such a girl is not helpful. As a rule, doubts expressed grow stronger. In talking with a girl who wants to tell all that she doubts, I have found it helpful to lead her to make positive statements as to what she believes, and urge her if she feels that she must part with her old faith to start a new one with what she *does believe*. To treat her as "wicked," or to be "shocked" by her expression of unbelief is exceedingly unwise. Positive teaching, free from dogmatism, along the line where her doubts seem to lead will help to strengthen her, and work with actual problems of a social and altruistic nature will act as a good balance. Those who are at work with actual life problems have invariably the

strongest and broadest faith because they come close to humanity and see its worth as well as its weakness, and in the long run can not explain what they see without the presence of God in the world, nor help the deep needs they realize without the aid of Christ.

If the girl who questions is sincere, and is troubled and unhappy because she can not believe, she deserves and should have the deepest sympathy. The teacher to whom she comes for help is to be envied, for she has the great privilege of an opportunity to help her *see*.

Oftentimes it is such a little thing that hides from her the whole great range of Christian thought. I shall remember always the little hill that hid my view of the White Mountains I had made such a sacrifice to see. I had reached my stopping-place late at night, in the rain, and when morning came with a flood of sunshine I went eagerly forth to catch a first glimpse of the mountains. They were nowhere in sight. A quiet country road, shaded by tall trees, and a long, low range of hills was all I saw. Deep disappointment filled my soul. I determined to go back. Before noon my companion climbed the hill opposite the house and beckoned eagerly for me to follow. I shall never forget what I saw! There they were, clear, blue, reaching up to

the bluer sky. How I loved them that summer,—touched with fire at sunset, purple and gold in the deepening twilight, soft and far away in the early morning mist; and when clouds shut them in, hid them from sight, I knew they were there, calm, still, immovable! I had seen them. Yet for a whole morning a little hill shut them from my vision, and I had concluded that some one had deceived me, that from the little town they could not be seen.

The greatest power of the teacher is that of beckoning to the pupil that he may follow, helping him to climb the little hills, that he may open his eyes and *see*. The mental questions must be answered as far as possible. The difficulty in the way must be surmounted. The hill must be climbed. If the teacher feels that she can not meet the task herself, friends and books may help. The girl usually doubts the miracles; doubts the deity of Christ, thinks the Bible is not different from other books, ask the old, old question, "If a man die, how can he live again?" She questions the existence of a God of power in a world where so much evil and misery abound; says the foundation of everything is gone, and that she is wretched and unhappy.

It seems to me a most helpful thing to make

her feel that all thoughtful men and women have at some time in their experience asked these questions. Both the teacher and the girl must accept the fact of mystery,—that there is much that we cannot hope to know, many laws of mind and matter of which we know just a little, and many more of which we know nothing. Mystery is a fact. That the spiritual sense can reach into a realm where the mental faculties cannot follow, and that the spirit of man can perceive what the mind alone cannot comprehend, we have a right to believe.

When so much has been acknowledged the teacher may tell her pupil what she personally believes about the disputed questions, and what the scholars of the world believe on both sides of the question. The teacher's belief is often the strongest argument, especially if she has met the questions, found an answer, and her own faith is positive, sane and strong. But if the teacher meets the troubled, anxious mental state of the girl with dogmatic argument, insisting upon the definite phraseology of some creed, she will most certainly fail to help. What we want to do is not to inculcate a creed, but to help a girl to come into living, vital touch with her Maker, that she may live with confidence and be a help in the world.

In time she will find the creed that expresses for her in the most satisfactory way what she has come to believe.

One of the most keen and interesting girls I have ever met, a junior in college at nineteen, said to me after stating all that she could not believe and why,—"Can't I believe that Christ was the finest man that ever lived, and try to live and work in the world as he did? I can't believe anything else." "Yes," I said, "that is true, believe that. I think he was *more,* but start there. Do all you have planned to help the needy, but don't forget to read again and again what he said about himself and what those who have served the world most fearlessly and faithfully say of him."

Two years later at the conference she told me she had come to the conclusion that "what he did and said and his present influence in the world can't be explained unless he was in a sense different from ourselves, divine." This was *her conclusion,* reached by thought and study. It was worth much more than any insistence two years before that she believe as I did.

The way to help most effectually the girl who doubts, so far as my experience has gone, is to help her to see that she can start, standing firmly on what she believes, and then to

help her faith grow by giving her work to do and by putting in her way books that give constructive teachings. Then one may supply her with stories of those who have lived what they believe, and if possible bring her into contact with fine, sane men and women of strong faith who love and enjoy life.

Sometimes all the doubts and questionings come because life is so hard and seems so unfair and unjust. Then the troubled girl needs to know just one thing—"God *is* love"; and only the teacher who loves can help her, —she will know how.

Nothing can so stimulate the teacher's own faith as to be brought, year after year, face to face with world-wide questions hurled at her from the lips of girls in their later teens. She learns at last to anticipate the time when doubts will trouble by giving during the early teens definite constructive teaching that will strengthen faith and deepen the spiritual sense.

The girl in her teens is a worshiper of the ideal, and the teacher's business is to furnish her with ideals so beautiful, so strong and so desirable that with irresistible power they woo her until she is ready to leave all and follow. If she is possessed by a great ideal nothing is too difficult for her to do, no price is too high to pay in the effort to realize it. Ideals are

the things in life most real, for they determine action.

In impressing high ideals upon mind and spirit the teacher of girls in their teens has advantages over those of any other period. All nature is ready to help, the wealth of emotion waits to be stirred to action, the spirit waits to be led.

If the spirit of the teacher is to lead, it must itself be led. It must be dominated by great ideals.

The girl in her teens needs a teacher whose deepest longings are not all satisfied—then she understands. She needs a teacher who is not afraid to let her emotions speak—who knows that the greatest deeds possible to man have their birth in the emotions. She needs a teacher who sees amid all the joys and real pleasures of the world, as well as amid the petty cares and dark and puzzling problems which are our common lot, the Spirit of her Creator working out in man for ultimate good the great plan of which she is a part.

Such a teacher can open the eyes of her girls and help them to see the Father for whom the human spirit is ever seeking—and will not be satisfied until it finds.

CHAPTER V

THE SOCIAL SIDE

I have been spending the day with adolescence, surrounded by boys and girls in their teens and young men and women just outside. It is now the evening of Memorial Day, and I have spent most of the day at the popular pleasure resort just outside the city. My companion, a young woman just out of her teens, had taken her holiday to come to the normal school to arrange for entrance in the fall. She has worked hard for two years, saved her money, and now plans to take a full course at the school to fit herself to become an expert teacher in China. She wanted to spend the rest of the day with me and talk about it, and I took her to W.——, that we might enjoy the out-of-doors. We sat in a secluded corner of the big open dining-room, and during dinner she talked of China's need, of the great opportunity,—hurled facts about the darkness of China at me until I gazed at the animated encyclopædia in astonishment. Her face glowed with enthusiasm; it is a sweet face, girlish and eager, and I could but wonder as I

looked at her how China's need had gotten such a hold upon her.

While she seemed for a few moments lost in thought, my eyes wandered over the room crowded with youth. All sorts and conditions were there, but all young. It was Memorial Day, but they had not waited to see the short procession of those who still remain to us of the hundreds who went out with their lives in their hands at the country's bidding. The procession and all it signifies meant little to them. They were jolly, happy, light-hearted, rough and very crude, and yet—they were just the ones who, if the country should call again, would answer; the boys promptly, willingly, offering their lives, the girls laying their hearts on the altar of their country's need. But to-day was just a holiday. At the table near us was a group of four, none over seventeen. The discussion and final ordering of the dinner was most interesting. They talked over prices, too, with great frankness, "That's too much," and "we don't need coffee, that will take ten cents off for each of us." I have seldom seen four people enjoy a dinner as they did. The girls' dresses manifested the effort to attain "the latest thing," and the boys were not behind. When they left the dining-room and walked down toward the

boat-house they tried to look so unconcerned! How they had saved for this day! This one little day! At every table were groups just as interesting. The grounds were crowded with other groups, laughing and shouting and joking. The jokes no one save themselves could appreciate. The skating rink was crowded—the dancing pavilion—the open air theater—every incoming trolley brought more intent upon having "a good time." I forgot China until a direct question brought me back. Here she was,—my eager, intense, enthusiastic girl,—looking forward with joy to China with its crushing weight of ignorance, its impossible language and its almond-eyed people neither asking nor desiring to be helped! What has made the difference between her and those all about me? Before I could answer her question or my own, three automobiles passed, filled with laughing girls and boys, all in their teens. Their faces were different from those in the grove,—their laughter more musical,—the automobiles bore their country's flag, the girls wore flowers. I knew some of the faces—it was a "house party," and they were off for a "good time."

Suddenly it surged over me that this was but one little spot in the great country—and the rush of the other thousands, the shop girls,

clerks, the office girls, the students, all in search of a good time oppressed me, and before my mind hurried back to a Chinese kindergarten, my heart cried, "Oh, Lord, how shall the world *play* with real pleasure and profit?" Is *this* the way? I heard no answer. The problem is too big for me, yet I cannot let it alone, for the world must play, and always the most eager players are young,—and always the girl in her teens is the center of the game.

Man is social. He must have companionships and pleasures in common with his kind. Only when physically deficient, mentally deformed, abnormal, does he become anti-social. This is true all through life and especially true in adolescence when nature is most keenly conscious of elemental powers and passions.

It is true that the girl in her teens is often alone. Alone she dreams her day-dreams, writes her poems, floods her imagination with all the things that are to be. In common with all humanity she meets her deepest experiences alone. Yesterday a girl of nineteen tried to tell me of the happiness her engagement to a fine, strong man had brought to her. She said, "all that it means *can't* be said." Last week a girl of eighteen tried to tell out all the loneliness and crushing disappointment her mother's death had brought, but she ended her

appeal for help with the old cry, "no one can really help, I've just got to bear it." Before the teens have passed so many girls learn that great joy and great sorrow must be met alone.

But for the common life of the every day, man lives with others. He can neither work alone nor play alone, and with adolescence comes the realization of it sweeping into the life. "The gang," "our crowd," "our set," work and play together.

The girl who loves and seeks solitude continually is ill mentally, physically, or spiritually, and needs watchful, sympathetic care, which shall discover the cause of her morbidness and help her to escape from it.

Environment fixes largely the companions of the girl, and her place in the social scale predetermines to some extent how she shall play. If she is in a home where the family is closely related to the church in all departments of its active work and life the church becomes her natural social center. Its entertainments, suppers, young people's socials, etc., furnish the means for her amusement and the place where she may form friendships. If she is a working girl boarding in a strange city or living in a home in no way connected with the church, unless the Y. W. C. A. through the gymnasium or other classes reaches her, where shall she

find her social center where she may enjoy the society of other young people, form friendships and have a good time? In summer the public parks answer that question. In winter, the skating rink, "the dancing party," the moving picture show.

If the girl lives in a happy home surrounded by wealth, together with culture and refinement, her social life will be guided and guarded during her teens and she will be helped to have a good time. If she be that happiest of all girls, the one whose own home is the social center, where music, games and fun abound, and where friends are always welcome, she is safe. Such homes might solve the whole problem, but there are not enough.

When the teacher looks seriously at the social side of her girls in their teens and realizes the craving of the whole nature for companionship, laughter and fun, she finds it hard to say "Don't" even to the things of which she does not personally approve, because she must meet the question clear and frank, "What *can* I do then?" That question has been answered, so far as the church is concerned, only here and there. Some splendid and successful attempts have been made that give us hope for the future.

Most Sunday-school teachers of girls in their

teens have awakened recently to the fact that unless the demands of the social side be satisfied in a sane, healthful way, the girl's spiritual nature suffers and the mental and physical as well.

When once the teacher really sees it she can no longer be content to meet the interested members of her class just an hour on Sunday, to discuss the lesson of the day. The crowded parks, the trolleys, the "parties," the call of the great demanding whirl of amusements from Sunday to Sunday, presses upon her soul. She learns how her girls spend the week end and the evenings and then she throws herself, her knowledge, her skill, her time, into the scales, hoping where she finds girls in the danger zone to turn the balance in favor of clean, safe, sane pleasure.

Any teacher willing to make a little investigation will be surprised to learn how many of the girls enjoying the kind of amusements which do not make for sound moral health, were at ten or twelve regular members of the Sunday-school, and how many still come occasionally.

My observation the past few years of the social side of the girl in her teens, and especially the girl who has left school, has made me feel that if the opportunity to choose came to

me as to Solomon, I would rather have the knowledge and power to give the young people of to-day sane, safe amusement than anything else I know.

The social side of the girl reveals itself not only in the desire to have a good time, but in the deep and ardent friendships formed during the teen period.

While she enjoys to the full the society of the group, the girl in her teens invariably has a "dearest friend," who shares her joys, sorrows and confidences. This tendency becomes especially evident at sixteen and becomes more marked at the latter part of the period.

These friendships may be the source of greatest blessings or may mean the lowering of the whole tone of moral life. Both mother and teacher need to observe carefully the formation of friendships and be sure to encourage only the helpful ones. Public school teachers of experience can all testify to the rapid changes in girls which so often follow the development of a deep friendship.

I remember a girl of sixteen, dreamy, imaginative, and so much interested in her boy companions that lessons, home interests, and everything else were sacrificed. What to do with her, and what interests to substitute,

were questions that both mother and teacher failed to solve. At a most opportune time a "new girl" moved into the neighborhood and entered school. She was practical, attractive, a good scholar, greatly interested in outdoor athletics. Because they were neighbors, the two girls were thrown much together. The companionship deepened into friendship. Soon the dreamy sixteen-year-old was playing tennis on summer afternoons, and reading aloud in the hammock afterward to rest. When winter came she suddenly decided that school and study were worth while, brought up all her averages, and made up her mind to try for college. Skating and the gymnasium made her a new girl. And all this transformation, fortunately for her good, came naturally and very rapidly through the influence of her companion. It comes almost as quickly in the other direction. Nothing can be more helpful to the shy, timid, self-conscious girl than the companionship of one who will encourage her and help her take her place with others in the social life of which she is a part.

Some of the bitterest suffering known to girls in their teens comes because they are "left out" and must go "alone." The misery of being left to oneself is registered in that familiar sentence, "Oh, I don't want to go

alone!" The girl in her teens needs a "chum," a "best friend," a companion, and anything that the teacher can do to aid in the formation of helpful friendships is worth while, for the friends loyal and true through the teen age are the ones who in later years, when the need is deeper and friendships are tested, stand by. That there should be some way and place in which, surrounded by a Christian environment that makes for righteousness, girls in their late teens and just outside, who have no homes, or homes only in name, can meet and learn to know young men of the right sort is evident to all who have even considered the matter.

When the Great Teacher was here no need escaped his notice. All that he taught and did was in response to *need*. Many of the teachers of to-day are earnestly asking how far they can follow him in this great principle of his life.

When as teachers, interested in what we call the deepest things in the girl's life, we are sometimes impatient with her light-heartedness, with the giggles and boisterous fun and "silliness" of the early teens, and the social tactics and sophistries of the later period, let us remember that the natural, healthy girl is "whole." She is body, mind and spirit, and all

three together make her a social being. All three speak in the passion to enjoy,—to seek pleasure. And the teacher of girls in their teens is as truly in the service of the living God when she boards the trolley car and accompanies her girls to the lake for a picnic supper after a day of hard work or study as when teaching them on Sunday the splendid principles that governed Paul's life. She just as truly serves, some cold, rainy, February afternoon as, with two of the girls she wants to know better, she cuts out red hearts to decorate the room for the valentine social to which the members of her class have each invited a girl not specially interested in the Sunday-school as when she talks over on Sunday, "Serve the Lord with gladness," for on Sunday she is telling them how to serve and on Tuesday she is showing them how through her own action. And they understand and are more willing to listen as she strives to impress upon mind and heart the facts and ideals that shall keep them steady, pure and true amidst all the distractions and temptations of the world's good time.

If the teacher once catches a glimpse of the significant fact that a girl can not play wrong and pray right, a new realization of the importance of the social side will stir her to

action and send her out to seek help from all who are willing to aid in the solution of the world problem, of how to satisfy the social nature in ways that make for character.

CHAPTER VI

HER RELATION TO THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL

That the Sunday-school has no relation whatever to vast numbers of girls in their teens is a fact apparent to any one interested in the girlhood of that period. And it is a fact of tremendous significance. It means that at the time when the religious sense is keenly responsive, when the mental faculties are alert, when the physical is asserting itself with all its power for good or evil, the girl in large numbers is not getting definite, systematic instruction from the best book of ethics, morals and religion that the world has known. She is not being brought face to face each week with questions that have to do with her own welfare, and that of the world, nor is she being led to think definitely of her personal relation to the church and its work for mankind. Unless she is in some way led to think along these lines all the myriad little interests that call to her from the outside world slowly crowd out the more real and uplifting thoughts and influences.

Every one, even in mature life, needs to

come regularly into contact with influences that tend to lift him up and woo him away from the domination of the petty and material, and even more is it needed during the years when character is taking definite form.

No girl can afford to lower her ideals or even to allow them to become tarnished. Life apart from contact with religion in some form seems to do that. Men in later years seem often to recover the ideals lost during their teens; women seldom do.

So even a glance at the problem shows one that the first thing for the Sunday-school to do is to establish a relationship between itself and the multitudes of girls in their teens.

The best way to do this, as any teacher knows, is to keep a strong hold on the girls who have been regular in attendance up to twelve years of age. With these girls as a nucleus, it is easier to make definite effort to gain new members and to make the class so attractive that they will stay.

When the teacher has resolved to make the effort to reach out for the girl who is leaving the Sunday-school in large numbers, the clear and challenging question, "What makes a class attractive to the girl in her teens?" immediately presents itself.

In the first place, the Sunday-school as a

whole makes a great difference to the girl in her teens. She likes enthusiasm, the impression that the school is popular with its students, that indefinite atmosphere which makes her know that pupils and teachers alike enjoy the hour and come because they want to. A superintendent who is popular with young people, who is thoroughly likable, is almost indispensable in the teen age. The Sunday-school choir with fortnightly rehearsals, if impossible to meet oftener, is a great help, and after a year or two of training will do splendid work. I have in mind a school where the organized choir meets only once a month. The music for the next few Sundays is practised; those who are to be soloists or those to sing the duets are chosen; light refreshments are served by the committee from the choir, and a most enjoyable evening spent. The regular attendance of the choir at Sunday-school has been remarkable, and a number of new members gained. The same methods can be used with a Sunday-school orchestra when there are enough members who play the various instruments.

The girl in her teens enjoys and responds to the well-arranged program when the prayers, the responses and the whole order of service are dignified and impressive. Just watch the

college girl and her younger sister in the preparatory school at chapel and you can read her response in her face. She enjoys variety, too, and the program which remains in use so long that after three years' absence she can come back and go through it exactly as it was when she left, is not the kind likely to appeal to her.

We have seen in our previous studies that the girl in her teens is in love with real life. She likes people, and the Sunday-school lesson must discuss real people and present problems if it is to deeply interest her.

I was present recently in a class of twelve girls about sixteen years old. Nine members of the class were supposed to be "heathen" and three girls were to tell any one of the parables as if for the first time to these people, anxious and curious to learn of the Christian faith. The interest was very real. After the telling of each parable the class discussed it and what it would mean to a people hearing it for the first time. "The Sowing of the Seed," "The Good Samaritan," and "The Ten Talents" were told. At the close the teacher told very vividly of an experience of a dear friend of hers who sat one day in the great plaza of a Mexican city, and told the story of the lost coin to a Mexican woman who wore a bracelet

of old and curious coins. The account of the response of this Mexican who heard the story for the first time made a great impression upon me, as upon every member of the class. The teacher then appointed three girls for the next week to tell any one of the experiences of Jesus on his preaching tours as they would tell it to a group of factory girls who had neglected church for years and almost forgotten how to pray. Several protested that such girls would not listen, and the discussion as to their needs, what they had to help them live pure, true lives, what had made them careless and indifferent, was brought to a close by the quiet question of the teacher, "Do these girls need Christ or his teaching?" They said, "yes," with conviction, and in answer she said, "Then there must be a way to tell what he said and thought so that they will listen; perhaps next Sunday one of our girls will find the way, and I have a most interesting story to tell of a splendid factory girl who herself found a way."

That lesson did so many things for that class of girls. It made them think. First they had to be able to tell the stories Christ told. The class in discussion had to think of the adaptability of the story to the people who needed to hear it, and of all it could mean to

them. They felt the joy of the one who had the privilege of telling it to the Mexican for the first time. They said themselves that the great army of girls in our factories need Christ. They were to think for a week on how his words might be brought to them. The lesson was left with anticipation for next week's story. It was a type of what every lesson should be. It connected the past and present; it touched life in their immediate surroundings and in the uttermost parts of the world; it gave opportunity for original expression and it led to discussion. It reached some conclusions. It appealed to the imagination and emotions and closed with a desire on the part of the pupils to talk more, and know more, and think more.

Perhaps in years to come we shall have good courses of lessons, six or eight weeks in length, which will help the teacher to do just these things. Courses which shall deal with church history for six or eight weeks, then with missions, with charities, with the history of the Bible, with the definite teachings of the New Testament and their relation to society to-day, dealing always with *life* and always with Christ as the great helper and redeemer of man in his struggles to live aright. While we wait for such courses the individual teacher

must attempt, with the material she has, to make real and vital connections with life, broaden the pupil's horizon and increase her desire for knowledge. New courses and better lesson material, either in public school or Sunday-school, never come through folding one's arms and spending one's time criticizing the material at hand, but by using it, changing it, adapting and experimenting with it until something is found which more nearly meets the need. Any teacher now reading this chapter may be the one to discover through her own experience just the material for which teachers of the girl in her teens are waiting. That is the reason every one may teach with courage and joy.

It makes little difference where one starts in the discussion of public-school or Sunday-school problems, he always comes back to the teacher. After all has been said, the teacher is the greatest force in establishing and maintaining a close relationship between the girl in her teens and the Sunday-school. "Ways and means" are necessary and to critics of the so-called "machinery" of the Sunday-school, I have only one answer—unless I can get a pupil to come, I can't teach him. Absent and irregular pupils receive no benefit even from the finest of teachers, and any legitimate

"means" by which a pupil may be induced to come, and a regularity of attendance be established, we have a right to welcome and use. But after the pupil has entered and become regularly enrolled it is the teacher who is the stimulating, guiding and holding power. To analyze the charm of personality which attracts and holds the girl in her teens is impossible, but there are certain things which the teacher must do that we may discuss.

She must remember that the girl in her teens has "grown up," and that she is very conscious of it. One must be more her friend than teacher. In the earlier years every Sunday-school teacher really interested in her pupils calls freely in the home. When the girl reaches the teen age, the teacher must ask permission to call. "May I call on your mother?" often opens the way for a special invitation, or at least gives the girl an opportunity to make the invitation cordial or to let it be known that for some reason she prefers not to have her teacher call. I remember one girl of seventeen who never gave me any encouragement when I suggested calling, and I respected her wishes. One day when she was very ill, the mother asked me to come. The girl had always dressed well, was intelligent and refined, and would have been supposed to

come from a family of comfortable means. I found it to be a home of real poverty, where the father, a nervous wreck struggling with diabetes, was unable to work regularly, and the mother was obliged to assist. Even with the seventeen-year-old girl giving every cent she could spare, it was a hard struggle. The girl was proud and reticent; she had not wanted me to know, and I was glad I had not come until she was willing. That day when she was ill and discouraged she was willing—she really needed me.

There are many times when for reasons akin to this or others entirely different but equally good, a girl prefers to have her teacher see and know her apart from her home. Every woman who understands girlhood in the later teens respects such a wish.

The teacher's home should, if possible, be always open to the girls and they should feel free to come. Sometimes it is not possible and then the cosiest corner in the smallest church parlor should be available.

As the girl approaches the later teens the Sunday-school class should become more and more a place of training for service. It has been my experience that after seventeen many girls prefer to work in Sunday-school rather than to remain as pupils. If the girls express

such a desire, or show particular willingness to act as substitutes, to help in the music of the elementary departments, or to tell stories to the beginners, such a desire should be recognized and an opportunity given a girl to test herself under supervision. The Sunday-school should be constantly preparing assistant superintendents, directors of music, secretaries and teachers. Material for the teachers' training-class is found in classes in the later teens.

Some of the most loyal, responsive and successful teachers of pupils from nine to twelve, I have found in the boys and girls of the later teens. While they lack mature judgment and discretion, they have enthusiasm and desire to succeed in any undertaking. If the Sunday-school is constantly training such helpers as assistants, and testing them as substitutes, then the changes that are bound to come in the teaching force of any Sunday-school are not so disastrous, for some one will be ready to supply the need.

As has been hinted in previous studies, the Sunday-school should lend valuable assistance in making the church a social center for the young people who need it. To be of real vital interest to the girl, the Sunday-school must touch her everyday life. It does that through

the social side of its work. The organized class giving socials, entertainments, enjoying lectures and music, picnics, trolley parties, skating or camping has a decided influence for good on all the members. I know of one such organized class of girls eighteen and nineteen years old which met three times a month for an entire year. They met one week "for fun," the next to "go somewhere," or "to hear a talk," or "to sew and read, and talk if we want to," and the third for a "sing" to which they invited members of the boys' classes. All these meetings were popular, well attended, and have meant a strong united class with a splendid spirit.

The girl in her teens needs the Sunday-school because of the help and uplift which its teachings are bound to bring to her. Even if she belongs to a class in its early teens which is given over to the giggles, to wandering thoughts, to all sorts of asides in more or less noticeable whispers, to the continual admixtures of the Bible lessons and the events of the week just passed or to come,—even though as is often the case with the American girl, she is thoughtless enough to forget to be either reverent or courteous, still it pays for her to come. She gets something,—often more than we think.

And the Sunday-school needs the girl in her teens. It needs her devotion, her enthusiasm and eagerness, her close touch with both the real and ideal in life, that it may keep its balance, stay in the real world of need, and not walk far afield by paths of theory. The Sunday-school has awakened to its need of the girl, and now at its door lies the task of making her feel more and more her need of it.

VII

HER RELATION TO THE CHURCH

The girl in her teens, in common with all humanity, needs the upward pull. Fresh air, suitable clothing, nourishing food, so desirable in all stages of her development, become, we have seen, an absolute necessity during her teens. If not supplied, her whole future is doomed to pay the penalty; and unless during the period of the awakening and strengthening of ideals, a steady, uplifting, spiritualizing force has a definite influence upon the rapidly changing and developing forces of her nature, the chances are that her whole future will pay the price neglect always demands. The steady, upward pull is a necessity.

There are so many things in life that furnish the downward pull. Even the more fortunate girl, who lives in her own home and spends the greater part of each day in the enlarging atmosphere of a good public school, feels the downward pull. In the most carefully selected of select schools, the girl, though guarded every moment, feels the downward pull of the petty, selfish and mean. The girl in her teens

hard at work among the world's toilers is painfully conscious of it in one or more of its many forms.

In the struggle between the higher and the lower—the upward and the downward pull—humanity finds its growth and development. If there is no struggle there is no strength. The girl in her teens does not know all this—her teacher does, and puts forth all her effort to strengthen the upward pull.

As we study and observe the girl in her development one question persistently follows us. To what shall we look for this upward pull? There are many answers: the home, the school, friends, good environment, the church. With the last we are especially concerned.

Even the most open and avowed enemy of the church of to-day would not hesitate to place it definitely on the side of the upward pull. Its history, teachings and ideals, like its spires, point upward. It says reverently and steadily to a world of busy men so much engaged in the rush for mere things that they find it easy to forget all else, two simple, tremendously significant words—GOD IS. It says persistently, above the struggle for power through possessions,—"Truth, Righteousness, Justice, Love, these alone mean hap-

piness," and at some time during his progress from childhood to old age man stops to listen. The most natural and effective time to stop is during the early teens.

Of course the church, being made up of humanity, has its weaknesses. As an upward pulling force it is not perfect. Nothing is. Its most loyal friends are the ones most conscious of its faults and failures. Its members feel its weakness more keenly than the outside world possibly can, just as the members of a family feel more deeply than the outside world the weakness and failures of its members in any particular.

But in spite of its errors of creed, its lack, in many cases, of authority and initiative, and its temptation to shun real problems, yet the members do feel the power of its upward pull, and the community in general is conscious of it.

To place the girl in her teens where she will feel most strongly the lifting power of the church is the business of her parents and teachers.

In the average community the girl has been more or less in contact with the church from her earliest years. Her estimation of its value, its purpose and power, has been built up through the years by what she has heard

parents, companions and teachers say of it. It is a refuge for the weak, a company of people who think themselves better than others, a respectable moral organization through which men climb to higher social planes, a necessary guardian of good in the community; or, the visible expression of the religion of Jesus Christ, the highest and most potent force in the world to-day for the conversion and uplifting of mankind. Her opinion is in accordance with the general opinion of those in her immediate environment.

As she approaches her teens, if her parents are not church people, through the influence of the Sunday-school of which she is a member she usually becomes a more or less regular attendant upon the services of the church. If her teacher is wise she does all in her power to establish the habit of church attendance. If the pastor has a thought and a word for the younger members of his congregation the girl, interested and helped, responds according to her temperament.

About the time she enters her teens, if she is a Sunday-school girl, she has had, through Decision Day or in answer to the direct question of her pastor or teacher, the opportunity of saying, "I choose to be a Christian." If her teaching has been careful and wise she will

know what being a Christian should mean to a girl of thirteen, and she will make the choice gladly and of her own free will. Before she is sixteen she will have met the question of her direct relation to the church. Shall she join it in its work in the world? If "joining the church" is made the simple, sincere matter that it really is, the average girl responds easily and earnestly. Only those who year after year have helped girls from fourteen to sixteen decide to take the step can know the genuine, loving, devoted spirit in which they come to their decisions.

Through the weeks of instruction that follow the decision, when the girl learns, under her pastor's or teacher's direction, the history of the church, the development of her own denomination, and the statements of its creed, the work the church has done, and is actually doing for the poor and outcast, the rich and careless, her admiration for it deepens, and all the love and devotion of her girl heart goes out to Him whose wonderful life and sacrifice have inspired ordinary men and women to live in the world as real Christians.

After such instruction, when the Sunday comes on which she is to publicly unite with the church she *knows what she is doing* and *why*. She knows as fully as any one can

what she believes, for belief is a growth, and life and experience always modify it. The mystery of the communion service is to her as clear as it is to any of us, and she prays as truly and sincerely as the oldest and wisest.

How much of uplift to her whole life her act has been can be known only to those who year after year have walked home with her after the service, received her notes so full of joy, and watched her effort to live aright in the weeks that follow.

So far in the relation of the church to the religious and spiritual development of the girl the steps have been successive, natural, and easy, but now the hard part comes.

She is on Monday, after uniting with the church, the same girl that she was on Saturday before doing so. If she had a bad temper, she has it still; if she was easily tempted to be insincere, selfish, sarcastic, careless, unkind, the characteristics are with her still. She has simply placed herself on the side of the upward pull, and every one of us who comes in contact with her should watch the struggle against the downward pull never with condemnation and criticism, but always with sympathy and assistance.

Here is where the church so often fails. Having joined the church she is ever after

expected to be good. "The girl has joined the church, all is done," is a false and fatal conclusion.

I have been watching with real interest a young girl who, after a most happy engagement, a beautiful wedding, a delightful continental trip, is learning to live in the prosaic every day. She had forgotten that it is always there waiting for us. In her great uplift and happiness little things had not made her as angry as before. But she found out what could happen when "Harry" forgot to order the cream for the dinner party at which all her friends were present for the first time in her new home. After her outburst of anger she was so discouraged that she was tempted to think the whole thing was a mistake, that she could not have loved him, and she could never be happy again. She had not reckoned with herself. The plain details of everyday living reveal one to himself. He finds he cannot live in the clouds, and that the art of living harmoniously and finely in the valley must be learned, and it takes time.

The girl in her teens after uniting with the church and experiencing the uplift and stimulus must come back to the every day. Like my young friend, she so often thinks that she will "never feel angry again." She does, and

with the failure to control herself or the quick yielding to her special temptation comes the feeling of utter discouragement. She is not good enough to be a member of the church, and it was a mistake. She needs help—her mother or teacher—to make her see that even a deep love can not in a moment overcome a quick temper, nor uniting with the church overcome the habit of the unkind word and selfish act. It will give her comfort and courage to know that one becomes a real Christian by successive steps, and it will take all her life to accomplish the task.

The first thing a young member of the church needs to help her become what we want her to be, a sane, natural, happy girl, interested in, enjoying and loving all the things that belong to the normal girl in her teens, is work.

She must have something to do, for unless the emotions are given a sane, legitimate outlet, she may come to the fatal conclusion that religion is a thing apart from life, or there may follow a lowering of ideals, or the morbid introspection common to girls in their teens, but which the Christian should escape.

So we must direct her thoughts from herself to her companions. It is she who can establish a bond of interest between the other girl and

the church. She can bring the other girl under its influence, and help her see what it stands for in the world.

"No," said a girl to me at a conference, "it isn't any of the speakers, or the books, or sermons that have interested me; it is just Edith and Alice. They are such splendid girls and they just love the church and all the work they are doing. They are having such good times and are truly happy. I want to understand it. Whatever it is I want it." I have heard scores of girls say it in varying phraseology. One girl influences another more than we can, so we may set her at work with her companions.

But that is not work enough—and it is too indefinite. She must have a part in the mission work, the social work, be interested in the sick and unfortunate, and learn now that the business of the church is to care about the lonely women, the toiling women and their children, the little, narrow, self-centered women, and those who find it hard to be good, just as its Lord and Master cared. Nothing is more encouraging to those who love the church than a large number of bright, attractive, natural girls, on whose hearts and lives this great truth is beginning to make an impression which must find expression.

The second thing necessary to the right development of the girl in her teens is ideal Christian women in the church of which she is a member. The women of the church, from those a little older than herself up to those who for many years have been its support, must show to her what it means to be a Christian woman in the church, community and home. Alas for those girls who see that it means only attendance upon the services of the church when perfectly convenient, and when minister and choir are entirely satisfactory! Alas for those girls who see that it means little more than a comfortable sense of respectability and social opportunity!

Fortunate are those girls who in their early teens see among the church members scores of sane, true, large-hearted women interested in every need, anxious to help, and willing to serve in every way that time and means will permit.

The church of whose women the girl in her teens, watching with her keen eye, can say, in her ardent way, "I'd rather be like Mrs. ——, than any one I know—she is perfectly lovely," is of real value as an uplifting, vitalizing force in the world.

The girl in her teens needs the church to furnish the upward pull and there is need

of greater effort in every line and by every member to bring her into contact with it.

The church needs the girl in her teens with all the intensity of her power of devotion and genuineness of her love; with all the strength of her emotions so easily turned under right conditions toward the best things in life.

CHAPTER VIII

HER RELATION TO THE BIBLE

One beautiful June Sunday I stood waiting for my car at the transfer corner, thinking about the Sunday problem and watching the crowd hurrying away to the parks and the lakes, when a most interesting group of girls passed. There were six or eight of them about sixteen years old, and in their light dresses, their fresh, sweet faces half hidden by hats that were "too dear for anything," they made a picture good to see.

They were evidently returning from Sunday-school, for most of them carried Bibles, and, as I watched them out of sight, I was plunged into a wilderness of questions as to what that wonderful old Book, written in the dim, hazy past under foreign skies, in languages almost forgotten, could possibly have to do with gay, happy, laughing girlhood—in the midst of the things of to-day. And I knew that to the majority of girls in their teens it means little. Most of them own it, respect it, and feel a certain reverence for what it says, but it plays little part in their everyday lives.

The average girl in her teens uses it more or less in the preparation of her Sunday-school lesson. She hears certain portions of it read without comment in opening exercises in school; in a comparatively few instances it is read in the morning or evening at home. That is practically all that most girls have to do with the Book whose teachings have so largely made possible the wealth of happiness of the girlhood of to-day.

How to bring the girl in her teens into touch with this Book of books so that it shall exert upon her individual life its wonderful power of transforming, purifying, and strengthening character is a problem.

But those who have been trying hard to meet it have learned some things. They have found out that the girl in her teens knows little of the history of the Book, and that when she is told the story of how we got our Bible she is intensely interested. Its wonderful history, from the time before it lay in parchment rolls on monastery shelves and on through the centuries until it reached the hands of ordinary men and women, and the period of their struggle to learn to read that they might know what it said, stirs the imagination and awakens a host of questions that lead to knowledge.

When she begins to understand what it has

cost to preserve the book, how not only men and women, but boys and girls, have loved it and died rather than betray it or disobey its commands, it becomes to her a new book, worthy of her study.

But the history of the Book, although it is necessary and does deeply interest the girl and increase her respect for it, is by no means all we want her to have.

The fragmentary knowledge of Abraham and David, Esther, Ruth and Paul which she has gained in her childhood must be supplemented now by the knowledge of great periods and what the world learned through them. She needs to be shown what the Psalms and some of the chapters of Isaiah and the other prophets have meant to the literature, music and art of the world.

I remember with pleasure the class of girls sixteen and seventeen years old who studied the books of Job and Jonah with me one year. The dramatic element held us, and Job and his friends, Jonah and his struggle, became very real to us. Two years afterward one of the girls, in talking about references to the Bible in literature, said to me, "Well, when they refer to Jonah or Job I'm safe, for those two books I shall never forget." She can grasp a book as a whole, remember it and enjoy it.

But the study of the Bible under guidance and with every means used to make it interesting and helpful is not all that we want for our girl. She must be led to find in the Bible personal inspiration and help.

Experience so far has taught me that unless the girl in her teens is a member of a Christian Endeavor Society or kindred organization, or a member of the church, she is not likely to read the Bible for herself, nor is it easy to interest her to do so. She may enjoy poetry and really good literature, and be an omnivorous reader, yet never read the Bible. She has often told me frankly that she really does not like to read it because it is not interesting and she does not understand it.

We understand her feeling perfectly. The phraseology is unfamiliar, and her knowledge is not broad enough to help her with the context; and to do anything voluntarily with regularity, unless it is absolutely necessary, is not easy for the average girl in her teens. But every one interested in the future development of the girl's personal religious life is anxious to establish now, in her early teens, the habit of reading every day the words that have brought new life and salvation to the world.

It needs no argument to show that any girl

is safer, finer, and less easily led into dangerous byways of thought and action if in beginning the day, or when it closes, she takes time to read "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God," "Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you," or the story of the Good Samaritan, the healing of the blind, the parables, the thirteenth of First Corinthians, or, "If any man thinketh himself to be religious, while he bridleth not his tongue but deceiveth his heart, this man's religion is vain," or the next verse, with its clear-cut definition so plain that any girl can understand.

Through these and the other words of the New Testament she is coming daily into touch with the deepest, most fundamental truths to which men have ever listened. More than that, she is coming through these words into touch with Christ. No girl can read day after day the words he spoke or the record of his works of compassion and love, the story of his patient, brave endurance of the cross, his faith that the disciples he loved would carry on his mission, without becoming a finer type of girl. And if after reading she bows her head for a moment only, and sincerely prays for strength to do right all through the day, or when the day is over, asks for pardon for what she has done amiss, then

we need not fear that she will go far wrong on her way through life. One may be insincere under many circumstances, but one is rarely insincere when, alone, at the beginning or close of the day he reads the words of that Book, and prays. So we, who long for the best for our girl in her teens, are willing to do anything in our power to help her establish the habit of sincere reading of the teachings of Christ, and of genuine prayer for strength to live them out every day of her life.

Oftentimes such little things help in forming the habit. I know of one teacher successful in reaching the secret recesses of girls' hearts, who, with three of her fourteen-year-old girls, read every night for a year the same Bible chapters, she assigning them one week in advance. After they read the short selections they prayed for one another and the members of the class not Christians. Just how the prayers of those girls for their friends could or did affect their lives none of us can understand, but that they did have a definite moulding influence on the lives of the girls themselves and their relation to other girls was plainly evident.

I know of one impulsive, imaginative, sixteen-year-old girl who formed the habit of reading, while retiring, a chapter or more from

the weak, sentimental, but nevertheless fascinating, love stories which just then were her delight. She found it hard to go to sleep, and often lay for hours in a highly excited emotional state, going over and over the words of the hero and heroine.

At Christmas, an older girl whom she greatly admired gave her a Year Book having a Bible verse at the top of each page, followed by quotations or forceful words of explanation. She asked her young friend to read it the very last thing every night, and underline with pencil anything she thought especially fine or true, and put a question mark beside anything she did not understand, and every few weeks they would look it over together. The sixteen-year-old decided to learn the Bible verses. Often she looked up the reference in the Bible. She faithfully underlined, questioned, and went to bed with some of the finest thoughts in literature filling her mind. Any one who heard her testimony, while in college, as to what that year's reading meant to her might be almost tempted to present year books to all girls in their teens.

Another very earnest young teacher, in love with girls, purchased for her class cheap New Testaments and small unruled blank books. She assigned a topic for a month's reading,

such as faith, love, courage, justice, and asked the girls to cut from the Testament all verses on that subject, and paste them under the proper headings. The result was a group of girls reading every night on the assigned topic, and at the end of the month able to read from their blank books all that Christ and the apostles had to say on that subject. Many of the girls added quotations and poems referring to the special subject, thus enlarging their own conception of it.

The girls valued their blank books highly, and exhibited them with satisfaction. The teacher did not seem especially proud of the books, but exceedingly pleased that the class had grown familiar with so many of the verses. She had a right to feel gratified with her work, for she was helping them to become acquainted with the Book, just as I help my girls in their teens in school to become familiar with the encyclopædia—by sending them to it repeatedly, until they form the habit of consulting it.

That many girls in their teens are steadied and helped through hard experiences by the words of comfort and encouragement which they find in the Bible any teacher of experience in Sunday-school work knows.

I am looking now at the picture of the sweet,

strong face of a girl of seventeen. She is hard at work helping support the family. The father has tried many times to reform and let drink alone, and as many times failed. The girl can hardly endure the life at home, yet for the sake of the younger children she must stay. Recently, when I told her how much I admired her, she said, "It has seemed this year as if I couldn't keep on. I can't tell you how much two verses on my calendar have helped me. I keep saying them over and over, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee,' and 'Fear not, I will help thee.' "

Another girl, struggling to overcome the habit of exaggeration which has been a characteristic of her family for generations, said to me one day, "I think so often of that verse, 'With God all things are possible.' If it weren't for that I would give up, for just as I think I am improving I fail again, and it seems as if I never could tell things as they are."

I have found many girls in their teens lonely, discouraged, misunderstood, or in the presence of great sorrow, turning to the words of the Book, and really finding help and comfort.

If, then, the girl in her teens can be taught something of the history of the Bible,—the languages in which it has been written, the methods by which it was compiled and trans-

lated, and finally printed,—so that she will not half believe that in some mysterious way it dropped down from heaven, or else never even ask where it came from; if she can be taught that its men and women were real and lived under real conditions in a real world; if she can know something of their struggles, defeats and victories, and learn to love their psalms and poems; if she can be led to see something of their growth and development as they waited for the Christ to come, then the Bible will be to her a real book, not a fetish to be worshiped afar off.

And if she can be led to seek in the Gospels and letters of the New Testament help and inspiration to live honestly and sincerely, then the Bible will become a tremendous force for righteousness in her daily life.

When she meets the hard things of life or the temptations of leisure a girl so taught and trained will have something to help her; and such a girl, as she enters college and takes up critical study of the Book, will have nothing to fear.

The secret of the marvelous influence of the Old Testament on human life lies in three short words,—"And God said," and the secret of the marvelous transforming power of the New Testament lies in one word, "Christ"—

"Christ"—"Christ." When the girl in her teens opens daily to read for herself what that Book has to say of the leadings of Jehovah and the teachings of Christ, she is on the road to safety,—therefore the work of every teacher is to help her to open it.

CHAPTER IX

HER RELATION TO THE EVERYDAY

The girls in her teens, although she is able now and then through her imagination to transfer herself to a land of day-dreams, where all she desires is hers, for the most part is obliged to live in the everyday, and often she finds it hard.

But she is young—and one may always hope when in her teens. If she is ill, health may come in a few weeks, a month, a year at most. If she works hard, she may always hope for a "better place with more money," or by and by, just in the future a little way, a happy home of her own where she will have everything she wants.

If she is struggling for an education, the joy of what she will be able to do some day sustains her. If she is a care-free girl with no burdens, one whose parents give her every advantage and strive to make her girlhood happy, life is one great joy and the future an even more wonderful dream.

But these girls, every one of them is obliged to live in the ordinary world, and

we who realize it must so train them that when they meet it in reality they will be able to live happily.

One reason why there is so much misery and unhappiness in home life to-day is because the girl in her teens is not trained to live. Even those who love her most say, "Oh, she's young yet, there's time enough." Meantime habits are formed and when the "time" comes effective training is not possible. In spite of hopes, castles, day-dreams, most girls are destined to live amid the commonplaces of life, and unless we prepare them, many will fail to learn that

> "The trivial round, the common task
> Will furnish all we ought to ask;
> Room to deny ourselves, a road
> To bring us daily nearer God,"

and so insure our happiness.

The Sunday-school is limited of course in what it can do to guide the girl in the every-day, so many other agencies enter into her training, and yet we have seen that what we teach on Sunday must influence her on Wednesday as she settles some question, or we have not really helped her.

As we try to plan how we may best help her to live, we ourselves meet the question,

"What, after all, do we want her to be in this world of the everyday?"

It is a little hard to answer, we want so much for her, and yet it can all be summed up in one sentence, "We want her to be comfortable to live with."

When we stop to think of what a flood of blessing would come to this old world if all the girls now in their teens were comfortable to live with, and will be as they develop into full womanhood, we know no effort should be spared to make them so.

If the girl in her teens is comfortable to live with she will be content in the place where she is. She will have that sane satisfaction which is not apathy but which makes the best of what it has till something better can be found.

Very early in her teens the girl begins to pencil upon her face the first tiny lines which in later years, grown deep and heavy, will mark her discontent. There are so few faces that show their owners have learned to be content.

A sixteen-year-old girl friend of mine the other day said in a discouraged way, "Well, I wish Frances' mother felt differently about their home. Her mother is such a lovely cook, and their house is neat and pretty, too,

but she will never let Frances have any of the girls to dinner because they haven't a maid. She wouldn't let even *me* go upstairs to Frances' room, and I know it must be so pretty by the way she describes it. It is too bad; we just love her, and we could have such good times. She can't accept our invitations very often because her mother won't let her entertain us. It is just too bad."

The girl was right. It was "too bad" to deprive Frances of the society of these girls, who, though they came from homes where more money was expended, would have so enjoyed her simple hospitality.

Although not meaning to do it, her mother is teaching Frances to place wrong values upon things, and her life will be narrowed and made more and more unhappy because the living-room is small, and the floor not of hard wood, but painted around the outside of the rug, and she will come to believe that happiness consists of possessions. When she marries, like thousands of other girls she will be unhappy unless her own new home is perfect in equipment from the start, she will want the new, "up-to-date" things faster than her husband's salary can supply them, and the long line of misery that follows may easily be hers.

If, instead, her mother could demonstrate that a neat, clean, and therefore attractive home is a fit place in which to entertain any friend by welcoming her daughter's friends for a good time, how quickly for that girl things would assume their right places in the scale of importance. We can help her to be happy and content by showing her in what very simple ways good times may be had.

If the girl in her teens grown to womanhood is to be comfortable to live with she must be trained to be kind. Kindness is born in unselfishness, and if we expect her to be unselfish, the days of her teens must be her training days. She must be carefully guarded from daily association with women who speak cynically of life, and shielded from close contact with those whose conversation is invariably the criticism of their neighbors. She must be led to let her heart speak—the heart is rarely unjust and seldom unkind. Her thoughts must be continually turned, as were those of Frances Willard and Alice Freeman Palmer, toward her neighbors in need, until a world-sympathy is born in her, and the joy of helping makes her keen to help. The girl to whose lips almost involuntarily spring the words "Let me help you" will not find it so easy to utter the cutting word or the phrase that

leaves a sting. A real interest in "the other girl" will tend to make her unselfish.

If she is comfortable to live with she must be thoughtful. Thoughtfulness also has its birth in unselfishness. The girl wrapped up in thoughts of herself has little time to be concerned with others, and demands invariably that she be the center of the circle. She does not make others comfortable and is not good to live with.

The girl who is good to live with in the world of the everyday, shares her joys and pleasures with the family. How many times I have seen a tired mother forget her cares listening to the recital of her daughter's "good times"! Her petty little annoyances, her disappointments, she keeps to herself.

After all, when we sum up the qualities of the girl in her teens which endear her to every one, and make her good to live with, we can put them under the one word unselfish. If she is this, then she will apply herself to her studies; she will remember her mother's burdens and not add to them; she will think of all she owes to her father and show her gratitude to him; she will be a helpful friend to the boys and girls with whom she associates, and she will have a good time, as the unselfish girl invariably does. By frequent illus-

trations taken from life, the Sunday-school teacher may hope to make her see how true these things are. An absolutely unselfish girl may be, as those in their teens say she is, "impossible," but the impossible can be made wonderfully attractive by the teacher who can picture the girl in her teens at her best.

In her life in the everyday, no matter what her circumstances may be, the girl is constantly tempted to live below her best. The temptation to be disagreeable about the household tasks that fall to her, to forget the errand she is asked to do, to be careless about her room, to leave things for her mother to look after and put away, to be impatient with younger brothers and sisters—all these things are so easy. Not to yield to them requires constant watchfulness and struggle, and the word of warning on the part of the teacher, through story and illustration each Sunday, helps the girl see these faults in all their miserable littleness.

In her school life she meets the temptation to neglect her studies, and to spend too much time on the social side. Many girls are tempted to yield to petty deceptions; some are tempted to copy or exchange work; many are discourteous, and many more do nothing to make school life happy for any except those

in their own "set." Some whose parents are so unwise as to leave them without knowledge or protection fall into temptations from which they never escape.

The high-school girl needs from the earnest lips of a woman she admires the weekly word of warning, and the oft-repeated plea to keep herself pure and fine.

If the girl in her teens is in business she meets daily the temptation to let her own interests interfere with her employer's, to waste time, to give excuses, to indulge in pleasures that do not uplift, but mean late hours, little sleep, and physical unfitness for work. She needs every Sunday the practical words of warning and inspiration straight from the heart of a woman who understands her temptations and can help her to overcome them.

Wherever the girl in her teens finds herself she needs some one to make her want to be her best amidst all the things which tend to pull her down. She needs strong words that will show her to herself in all her weakness making her ashamed if she has yielded, and at the same time arousing in her the determination not to yield again.

When the teacher understands the girl in her teens and lives close enough to her to

become her confidante, she knows how hard the fight to be good and fine and strong in the everyday is, and she realizes more and more as her experience broadens that while the girl's love for her parents is a great incentive toward right living, and desire to please those whom she greatly admires is a help, and while unhappiness and other consequences of evil-doing act as deterring agents, yet no one of these things, nor all of them together, will prove strong enough to keep her pure and honest and make her unselfish.

What will? Nothing will make her absolutely perfect. Only one thing, so far as I know, will keep her safe and strong in the life of the everyday. That thing is the consciousness that she lives in the presence of God, accepting Jesus Christ as her example and her *Helper* in her effort to live aright.

A girl conscious that she lives out each day under the pure, kind eye of an infinite personality, interested in her efforts toward righteousness, and that she need not be afraid to ask for strength or for pardon, finds it easier to do right and harder to do wrong than the other girl who leaves him out of the struggle.

In all the hundreds of girls and women I have met, the most thoughtful, generous and unselfish, the purest in heart and mind, those

richest in the finer traits of humanity, have been conscious of the presence of God in the world of the everyday.

They live as in the presence of a perfect father, and live aright, not because men see, but because he sees, and they are able to live as they do because they ask for help and receive it. If we are to be of real help to the girl in her teens, this consciousness of the *reality* of God we must give to her.

I have so often seen it help in the lives of individual girls. I am thinking now of Vivian, whose parents had given her up in despair. She was careless, rude, and untruthful. In school her teachers considered her "a bad girl." The Sunday-school teacher who took her class when she was fifteen was one to whom the Christ was very real. She talked about him reverently, as if he were a real friend and a great help in everyday life. She interested Vivian. At Christmas she gave her Hoffman's "Christ." Vivian put it on her bureau, dusted the picture every day, and thought about it often. The teacher loaned her books of the sort which made Christ seem a real friend. She began to think of him as such and to pray that he would help her overcome the things that everybody despised. She read "What would Jesus do?" several times.

She began to feel that God saw and cared, and as she worded it, "I felt that in all these hard things Christ would help me, and I asked him many times every day to make me do as he would."

Her room showed that something had come to Vivian. A quietness came into her conversation. She treated her mother with a gentleness that was so different that her mother cried when she told the teacher about it. The girls saw the difference. Twice when she had been untruthful she went to her teachers and confessed it. She made a desperate struggle to speak accurately. Her father called her a changed girl, and his face showed his joy over the change. She is to-day one of the sweetest, strongest young women I know, prominent in her college and trusted and loved by scores of girls.

She is one of many whose lives I have seen changed, and as the years pass, and I see the power of the Christ still working miracles in girls' lives, I long for more teachers like that one who opened Vivian's eyes.

The greatest thing which the teacher can do for the girl in her teens is to open her eyes to a real Christ, for then all the incentives for pure, unselfish *living* in the commonplaces of life's "everyday" will be hers.

CHAPTER X

HER TEACHER

When for a moment one remembers the girl in her teens, the long line that lives in the memory from those just thirteen up through the sweetest and prettiest at sixteen, to the beautiful, graceful, and dignified ones just twenty, it makes a picture hard to equal.

There is such evident joy in just living! When one catches a glimpse of the groups in their light dresses, with hair ribbons of every size and color according to the wearer's interpretation of the latest fashion, wending their way to the high school, he feels that life is indeed a glorious summer morning. Though sighs and complaints may be heard over lessons too long and too difficult, they are not very deep, and are soon forgotten; though low marks do make very serious students with minds concentrated on work for a few days after report cards are out, yet with the majority the depression is short-lived, and life is sunshine once more.

When as whistles blow and factory gates swing wide, one catches a glimpse in the early

morning of the girl in her teens going to work, he hears snatches of happy laughter and jesting. No matter how hard the work, it cannot crush out the laughter in the heart of the girl in her teens; the good times after work is over or at the week end when she puts on her ribbons and gay attire make easier the crash of machinery and less painful the aching muscles.

The girl in her teens is glad she is alive, and her evident and keen enjoyment of a world which some of her elders have found hard and a little disappointing does more to cheer and brighten the dull gray of the commonplace than she knows, or than we stop to remember.

As we think of this long procession of the girl in her teens which memory can so easily recall, and then see in imagination the host of those who call themselves her teachers, we are tempted to cry, "Her teachers! What manner of beings are they who pretend to instruct, enlighten and guide all this energy, this fascinating line of possibility and promise!"

It is easy to write or speak of the "ideal" teacher for all this fresh young life, filled with inexpressible longings for success and happiness. But the study of the very human and very real teacher, ideal only in the highest sense, in that she is struggling after perfection, will be much more practical and helpful to us.

only deepened her sympathy and broadened her outlook on life, makes her a real inspiration to the girls who meet her each week.

I am thinking now of such a woman, into whose life one heavy sorrow after another has come. At thirty she is alone in the world, having lost in ten years parents, husband and two children. Yet there is no bitterness in her life. She is not in any sense a cynic. More than twenty girls, from sixteen to nineteen years of age, who make up her class, leave the presence of that sweet, strong woman with her tender, sympathetic spirit, and her calm, steady faith, able all the week to live better, more wholesome lives because they have been with her for one hour. She never speaks of herself, but often of courage, of hope, of making the best of things, of giving all one can in service to the world, of unselfish, cheerful living, and the girls listen and believe that all she says is true and possible.

The teacher must be an optimist. She is not self-deceived, she sees the faults of the girl in her teens. She is conscious of the thoughtlessness, the utter lack of courtesy, the love of the extreme in everything, and the greater faults of insincerity and pretense that characterize to so great an extent the girlhood of to-day. But while she is pained she is not dismayed.

She is a good diagnostician. She examines her individual patients, finds the weak places, discovers the cause of the disease, and then goes to work systematically to eradicate it, trusting to the normal, unaffected organs and tissues to aid in restoring perfect health. She believes in and uses preventive measures and they pay.

The teacher must herself be an example in thoughtfulness and courtesy, respectful to those higher in office, and willing to co-operate with, instead of criticizing, those who have plans by which they hope to add to the efficiency of the school as a whole.

None of these things are lost upon the keen-eyed girl in her teens; indeed, the teacher's dress, even the condition of her gloves, makes an impression and has an influence.

It has become a truism that to be successful in teaching one must know the pupil; yet only last week I met a teacher anxious for a new course of study which would interest her class of girls sixteen and seventeen years of age, who revealed in conversation the fact that she knew practically nothing of the girl's homes. She did not even know the section of the city in which many of them lived, had made no calls and could tell the occupation of only two of the fathers. She did not know for what the

girls were preparing themselves, nor any of their hopes or desires, and she had taught the class for two years. She said the girls were not interested, and did not prepare assigned work.

This type of teacher is fast disappearing, but wherever she exists the fact that the class seems to be "not interested" indicates very clearly that those who insist that *the teacher must know the girl* are right.

In the series of studies of the girl in her teens an article appeared in The Sunday School Times[1] giving the opinions of several hundred girls as to what constitutes "a lovely teacher," and according to the statements of these girls, a lovely teacher is, "pleasant," "fair to everybody," "treats every one alike," and "is interested in what you are doing." "She writes notes to you when you are ill," "calls on you," "is kind and patient," "makes the lesson interesting," "explains what you don't understand," and "knows a great deal."

Upon these as necessary qualifications of "a lovely teacher," the girl in her teens from all sorts of homes and from various parts of our country is agreed, and as we think about it we feel inclined to trust her analysis.

When the average teacher tests herself by

[1] "A Lovely Teacher," March 5, 1910.

these standards, she finds deficiencies, but they are not discouraging ones, because every characteristic named by the girls is possible to every teacher.

She can make things interesting if she is interested and takes time to prepare her lesson material. It is a never-failing source of surprise to discover what interesting material,—anecdotes, illustrations, pictures and information,—can be found upon every subject when one is looking for it.

It is perfectly possible for the average teacher to be "pleasant"—to carry about with her the atmosphere in which work becomes a pleasure and difficult problems are just things to be conquered. This atmosphere of cheerful hopefulness makes everything easy. For many teachers it is the natural attitude toward life and work, which comes from constant association with eager, buoyant youth. If it is not natural it may be cultivated.

"Notes" and "calls"—acts of thoughtful kindness on the part of the teacher when illness or trouble enters a home, may be small things in themselves, but they mean much to the adolescent girl, and they bring their own reward. They also are possible to every teacher.

The confidence of a girl is more easily gained if one, to use her own phrase, "really likes"

her. If a teacher knows her pupil, that is, sees her as an individual, learns her ambitions, longings, hopes and fears, she does "like" her. It is almost impossible not to like the average girl when one knows her. Every teacher can learn to teach individuals, not classes, and girls, not subjects alone.

The wise men of the past have told us, and experience and observation have proved, that we grow to resemble that which we admire. Admiration means imitation, therefore the necessity that those who are striving to awaken the best in the girl in her teens be those she can and does admire, and have traits of character she ought to imitate.

There never was a time in the history of religion when so many tools and such fine equipment for service were ready for those who want to be skilled workmen, and the teachers who desire the skill to make their work on Sunday really count in life every day in the week, have but to begin just where they are and progress as fast as possible. Bible classes for those who want and need to know more of the Book they teach are easy of access to many, and courses of study are open to all. The training class, where the characteristics of the various ages, and the needs of pupils, and how to meet them, may be intelligently considered,

is possible in any community, and good correspondence courses are now available.

If one desires to do so it is perfectly possible for him to become a better teacher for the sake of those whom he instructs. For it is in desire, after all, that action is born, and that which one greatly desires he will seek after. To help the girl in her teens see the best in life and desire it, we have said, is the business of her teacher. Through the physical, mental, and spiritual sides of her nature, the teacher is to lift the girl to the place where she can see for herself.

There are so many girls all over our country, and in the farthest corners of the earth, to-day rendering splendid service to the world, sometimes in the shelter of their own homes caring for their children, sometimes in great hospitals, or lonely outposts as nurses, sometimes as teachers or missionaries, often as servants of every sort, who are living with a broad outlook and deep, sympathetic insight, because somewhere, back in the teens, by the patient effort of teachers they were lifted out of their narrow selves to the place where they were able to catch a glimpse of the real meaning of life.

Finding it impossible one day to make my way through the crowds on the street waiting

for a procession to pass, I stopped, and standing back a little from the curb watched the eager faces gazing up the street. Right in front of me stood a group of men in their working clothes, and in their midst a tall, broad-shouldered expressman, explaining the reason for the "parade." In a moment the sound of brass instruments burst upon us, a line of policemen swung into sight, the crowd of small boys following close beside the uniformed men, their eyes on the flying banners, and keeping step as only boys can.

Suddenly above the noises of the street, above the commands of the officers and the music of the band, I heard a little, thin, shrill voice from the crowded corner where the men stood, cry out, "Lift me up so I can see!" It was a street child, a little girl, whose dress and face showed that neither money, time, nor thought had been expended upon her. She looked so tiny as she stood there trying to peer through the crowd at the procession in the street. But she was not afraid. Again it came, "Lift me up, I say, so I can see!" Eager, insistent, filled with desire, the voice attracted the attention of the men. There was a moment's hesitation, and then with that look one loves to see upon the face of a strong man, the expressman stooped and picked her up.

As he held her there, high above the heads of the others, one little arm went round his neck, and she "held on tight" while the other hand pointed at horses, banners and men, and she called out again and again in her joy and delight, "Now I can see, I can see everything!"

The procession passed. He placed her on the sidewalk, and as the crowd scattered she hurried away, satisfaction written upon her small face. But as I walked slowly back toward the great school buildings on the hill, her voice rang in my ears, "Lift me up so I can see!" And I knew that that is the unconscious cry of the childhood of the world to the teachers of the world; that those words are the plea, often unexpressed, of the girlhood of to-day—"Lift me up—so I can see!" And I know that those who answer must themselves have eyes opened by the Christ, to see, and hearts quickened by his power, to lift.

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